



Two killed in gas leak at pharmaceutical plant in Visakhapatnam

page 10



Nagaland's law and order situation has improved: Neiphiu Rio

page 12



Banks sanction ₹1 lakh-crore loans to 30 lakh MSMEs

page 15

India, Sri Lanka hold talks over debt after Rajapaksa's request

page 14



NEARBY



U.P. Cong. chief detained in Lucknow, released

Lucknow
U.P. Congress president Ajay Kumar Lallu and party workers were detained and later released in Lucknow on Tuesday as they staged a protest against the arrest of the party's State minority cell chairperson Shah Nawaz Alam in connection with anti-CAA violence last year.

NORTH & EAST ▶ PAGE 6

Bengal wants flights suspended to curb COVID

Kolkata
West Bengal Chief Secretary Rajiva Sinha on Tuesday wrote to Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation, P.S. Kharola urging him to stop domestic flights from places with high prevalence of COVID-19 cases to Kolkata for two weeks from July.

NEWS ▶ PAGE 12

Groom dies, 95 guests test positive in Bihar

Patna
A groom died two days after his marriage, and 95 others, mostly those who attended the wedding ceremony, were found to be COVID-19 positive in Bihar. The ceremony took place on June 15 at village Dehpali in Patna district. The 30-year-old groom was a software engineer from Gurugram.

NEWS ▶ PAGE 12

Delhi riots: chargesheets filed in 3 murder cases

New Delhi
The SIT of Delhi Police on Tuesday filed three chargesheets in murder cases of three Muslim youths during the north-east Delhi riots in February. The victims were killed and thrown into a canal. The bodies were recovered on March 3.

CITY ▶ PAGE 2

OPPORTUNITIES ▶ PAGE 2

Core industry output contracts for third month

Only fertilizers recorded growth of 7.5% amid overall dip

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

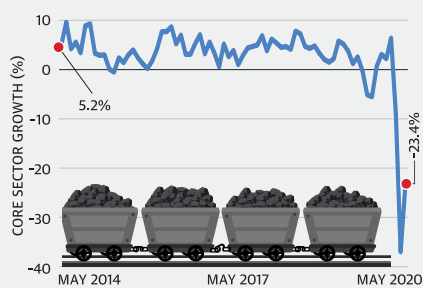
The output of eight core sector industries shrank 23% in May 2020, the third straight month of contraction, according to data released by the Commerce Ministry on Tuesday. Although the contraction narrowed from the 37% decline in April, economists expect the trend to continue at least through June.

Of the eight core sectors, the fertilizer industry was the only one which saw actual growth in output in May, rising 7.5% in comparison to May 2019. The rest continued to contract, with the steel sector performing the worst and recording a 48.4% fall, while cement production dropped 22%.

The energy sectors also showed negative growth,

Sharp falls

Coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, fertilizers, steel, cement and electricity make up the core sectors



with coal production falling 14% and crude oil and natural gas production dropping 7% and 16.8% respectively. Petroleum refinery production, which carries the greatest weight in the core sector index, saw a contraction of 21%, while electricity generation dropped 15.6%.

“Optically, it is a better picture in May as compared to April, but the situation is still way below normal or

pre-COVID levels,” said Devendra Kumar Pant, chief economist at India Ratings and Research, the Indian arm of the Fitch group.

“It is the kharif sowing season and there has been a good monsoon so far, with a good reservoir position, so we are seeing some growth in the fertilizer sector,” Mr. Pant said.

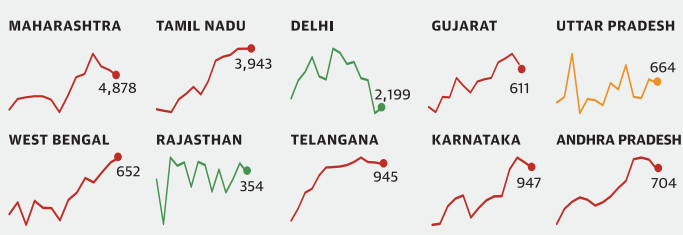
CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10

Viral tracker

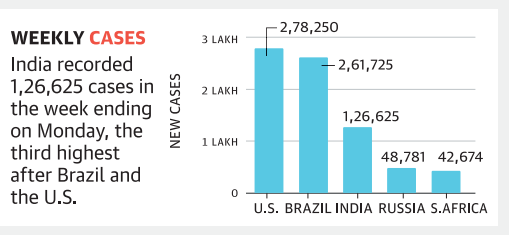
With 17,672 new COVID-19 cases recorded on Tuesday, India's tally rose to 5,85,202 infections

NEW CASES AND DEATHS	
CASES 17,672	DEATHS 505
7 DAY-CHANGE +4.8%	7 DAY-CHANGE +19.1%

The line graphs depict the new cases in the last 14 days in select States. If average cases in the latest seven days are much higher than the previous seven days, then the cases are rising (red); if they are lower, then cases are dropping (green); if they are similar, then the cases are flatlining (orange)



Anxious wait: People waiting to get tested for COVID-19 at the Rajiv Gandhi Super Speciality Hospital in New Delhi on Tuesday. ■ R. V. MOORTHY



5.5 lakh COVID-19 cases in Delhi by July 31 unlikely: govt. panel head

‘We thought number of cases will increase exponentially’

NIKHIL M BABU
NEW DELHI

The head of a Delhi government-appointed committee, which predicted around 5.5 lakh COVID-19 cases in the city by July 31, on Tuesday said that the scenario was “unlikely” considering the current decline in new cases. “It is time to do a new forecast for Delhi,” Mahesh Verma told *The Hindu*.

The number of new COVID-19 cases in Delhi has seen a decline for three straight days till Monday. However, the new cases increased slightly from 2,084 on Monday to 2,199 on Tuesday.

“When we made the prediction the doubling time was around 13 days. We thought that the number of cases will



Dr. Mahesh Verma

keep increasing exponentially,” said Dr. Verma. He said the three-day fall is too short a period to say whether it is a trend and cases would further decrease in the city.

“It is a good sign and I hope this trend continues, but we can't say anything at this point. We need to watch it for a few more days to call it a pattern,” said Dr. Verma.

Giridhara R. Babu, professor at Indian Institute of Public Health, Bengaluru, also said the number of cases have to be looked at over a period of seven days at least to come to a conclusion.

Based on the Verma-led committee report, the Delhi government had said on June 9 that 80,000 beds will be required in the city by July 31.

“Looking at the dip in the new cases over the past week [barring June 26] and also the fact that the number of active cases has increased by only about 1,000 in the same time, I don't think we would need the number of beds we are creating,” a Delhi government official said.

OVER 50% BEDS VACANT ▶ PAGE 2

Corps Commanders hold talks in Chushul

Attempt continues to ease tensions

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

India and China held another round of Corps Commanders-level talks at Chushul in Ladakh on Tuesday aimed at reducing tensions along the border as earlier efforts made no headway.

The talks were under way till the time of going to press.

The talks between Lt. Gen. Harinder Singh, General Officer Commanding of the Leh-based 14 Corps, and Maj. Gen. Liu Lin, Commander of the South Xinjiang Military District, began around 11 a.m. at the Border Meeting Point at Chushul on the Indian side.

The earlier round of talks was held on the Chinese

side at Moldo, opposite Chushul.

At the second round of talks held on June 22, the two sides had come to a “mutual consensus” to disengage along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), and defence sources had said the modalities for disengagement from all friction areas in Eastern Ladakh had been discussed and would be taken forward by both sides.

However, there has been no progress on the ground since and officials described it as a wait-and-watch situation, even as further military build-up continued on both sides.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10

RELATED REPORTS ▶ PAGE 11

LATE SRI M A VENKATARAMA CHETTIAR

LATE SRI ATHI KRISHNA CHETTIAR

THANKS TO WHAT OUR VISIONARIES SAW YESTERDAY, KVB IS THE FUTURE TO MANY, TODAY.

What our visionaries sowed in 1916, is what allows people to reap every day. On 1st of July, we celebrate our Founders' Day to pay tribute to our founding fathers – Shri M.A. Venkatarama Chettiar and Shri Athi Krishna Chettiar. Their foresight has enabled KVB to become a bank that spearheads the industry. With innovations and many firsts, KVB has a growing business of ₹1,08,000 cr. We salute our founders with continuous change and innovation, thereby keeping their spirit and vision alive. And this is what makes us the bank of the future.

Karur Vysya Bank
Smart way to bank
www.kvb.co.in | Helpline: 1860 258 1916

Sharp fall in reporting of non-COVID-19 diseases

Behavioural changes may have prevented outbreaks: experts

JACOB KOSHY
NEW DELHI

The ongoing novel coronavirus pandemic has led to India's disease surveillance system recording unusually fewer instances of diseases other than COVID-19, according to information on weekly outbreaks available on the website of the Integrated Disease Surveillance Pro-

gramme (IDSP), a Health Ministry body.

The IDSP issues weekly reports on disease outbreaks across the country based on its surveillance network that spans at least 600 districts.

In the week of March 16-22, the most updated report that is available, there were only six outbreaks/disease alerts reported. In the same week last year, there were 17 alerts; in 2018, there were 28, and in 2017, there were 45.

An alert is when a sizeable number of cases from a region are reported. The re-



Six outbreaks were reported during March 16-22 against 17 last year.

ports include specific villages from where the cases emerged, the mode of diagnosis and the steps taken by the authorities to control the

outbreak. The six alerts in Week 12 of the year included a case of Crimean-Congo Haemorrhagic Fever from Gujarat, three cases of chickenpox from Bihar, and a case each of dengue and food poisoning from Karnataka and West Bengal respectively.

No records after March

In a typical year, IDSP reports are available online every week. However there are no records this year after week 12, that is after March 22. In week 11, the IDSP reported 110 cases of COVID-19. The IDSP network records

the first cases of the virus infection in Kerala and until week 10 (March 2-8) appears to have regularly recorded disease outbreaks.

For instance, in the first week of March, it recorded 36 outbreaks of as many as 15 diseases ranging from anthrax to measles, as well as seven cases of COVID-19.

Officials said the under-reporting was due to the lockdown and the behavioural change that actually depressed instances of disease spread.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10

IN BRIEF

Admission forms for St. Stephen's delayed
NEW DELHI
Application forms for courses at St. Stephen's College, which were to be released on Tuesday, will now be made available only after a prospectus on admissions is issued, the college has said. The prospectus is likely to be released in a couple of days. Students applying to the college will have to first register at the Delhi University portal.

IIT-Delhi reports record placements
NEW DELHI
Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, on Tuesday said that its placement season has concluded with students receiving over 1,100 job offers. S. Dharmaraj, head of Office of Career Services at IIT-Delhi said: "IIT-Delhi has broken all previous year records of job placements... Number of placement offers increased by 4%." The second phase of the placement was held online due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Air Quality of Delhi-NCR			
Delhi	102	Gurgaon	117
Ghaziabad	120	Faridabad	000
Noida	98	Greater Noida	103
Good 0-50 Satisfactory 51-100 Moderate 101-200			
Poor 201-300 Very Poor 301-400 Severe >400			
Air Quality Index at 4 p.m. yesterday (Average of past 24 hours) Source: CPCB			

HC rejects plea for free COVID-19 treatment
NEW DELHI
The High Court on Tuesday rejected a plea that sought directions to the Centre and the Delhi government to bear the cost of testing and treatment for COVID-19 at private labs and hospitals. The Bench remarked that the petition had been filed for the benefit of the rich.

Waste energy plant to come up at Okhla landfill
NEW DELHI
The South Delhi Municipal Corporation signed an MoU with Indian Oil and the National Thermal Power Corporation on Tuesday to set up a waste to energy plant at Okhla landfill site. The plant will process up to 50 tonnes of refuse-derived fuel per day.

Over 2,000 new cases in city; more than 50% beds vacant

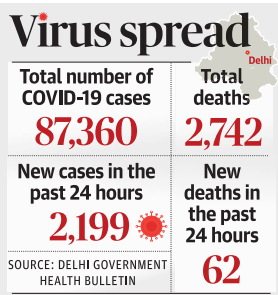
Hospitals to rework capacity to increase number of beds with ventilator facility

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI
A total of 2,199 new COVID-19 cases were reported in Delhi in the past 24 hours, taking the total to 87,360, according to a health bulletin released by the Delhi government on Tuesday.
The death toll has risen to 2,742 with 62 more deaths reported in a single day. Of the total cases, 58,348 people have recovered and there are 26,270 active cases.
There are 440 containment zones in the city as on Tuesday, as per the bulletin. People are not allowed to enter or leave a containment zone. Residents of the zones are not allowed to leave their houses and officials supply essentials to them.
Of the 13,661 beds for CO-



A child waits with his parents for COVID-19 testing at Rajiv Gandhi Super Speciality Hospital on Tuesday. *R.V. MOORTHY

VID-19 treatment in hospitals, 7,749 beds are vacant.
In a single day, 9,585 RT-PCR tests and 7,594 Antigen tests were conducted.
"An order has been issued to all hospitals in Delhi to rework their capacity to increase number of beds with ventilator facility, over and above the existing beds," the bulletin read. Arrangements have to be made as Delhi will be shortly getting 150 more ventilators from the Centre, besides the 425 already received, the order stated.
The Delhi government



spokesperson did not respond to calls and messages on whether the government was conducting RT-PCR tests for people who test negative in rapid antigen test.
The Delhi government on Tuesday also extended till September 30 its waiver scheme on water bill arrears and late payment surcharge, in the wake of the novel coronavirus outbreak.

Police file 3 chargesheets in murder of three Muslim youth during riots

Disfigured bodies of victims were recovered from drain

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI
The Special Investigation Team of Delhi Police on Tuesday filed three chargesheets related to the murder case of three Muslim youth during the north-east Delhi riots in February.
The chargesheets were filed before a magistrate in Karkardooma court. The victims were killed and thrown into a canal. The disfigured bodies were recovered on March 3 from a drain at various locations. The accused are in judicial custody.
The police said that on February 26 night, Hamza was killed by the rioters when he was coming from Mustafabad to Bhagirathi Vihar. A case was registered at Gokulpuri police station. He was killed and thrown into the drain near E Block Bhagi-



The drain at Bhagirathi Vihar in which bodies were dumped during the riots. *

Ankit Chaudhary and Himanshu Thakur – along with other identified and unidentified persons were involved in rioting in Ganga Vihar and Bhagirathi Vihar from February 25-26. They killed nine Muslims and injured several people who were passing by the area.
In a similar way, Aamin and Bhure Ali alias Salman were killed and thrown in the Bhagirathi Vihar drain. They were stopped by the Hindu group who had gathered at the spot after creating a WhatsApp group. There were around 125 members in the group but not all were involved in active rioting. "The victims were unaware of the tense situation and were passing by the area when they were attacked by the group," said a police officer.

Decomposed body of elderly woman found

Her kin in same building had no clue

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI
A decomposed body of an 80-year-old woman was found on the second floor of her house while the family – her elder son on the fourth floor – remained clueless about her death in south Delhi's Malviya Nagar, the police said on Tuesday.
They were alerted after some people complained about a foul smell coming from the house on Sunday.

Room bolted from inside
"The woman, Rajrani Gulati, who lived alone on the second floor, was found lying dead on a sofa," said Deputy Commissioner of Police (south) Atul Kumar Thakur said.
The room was bolted

from the inside, he added.
The post-mortem was conducted at AIIMS and the report is yet to come.
The body has been handed over to family members, the police said. The victim's son, Rajesh Gulati (55), along with his family, resides on the top floor of the building. The family told the doctor that the victim had diabetes, the DCP said.
Last week, Rajesh visited his sister's house in Madangir. He started feeling unwell and got himself admitted to Mehta Hospital in Madangir for 2-3 days, the police said.
The woman's other son, who has been bedridden for the last two to three months, lives in Chirag Delhi with his family, they added.

DU gets contempt notice over deferment of open book exam

HC questions the university for failing to inform the Bench

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI
The Delhi High Court on Tuesday issued contempt notice to Delhi University for withholding material information from the court and trying to mislead the court over deferment of the open book exam, scheduled on July 1 by another 10 days.
A Bench of Justice Hima Kohli and Justice Subramonium Prasad said that on the last date of hearing on June 26, the university had submitted that it was "thoroughly geared" up to conduct the examination. Based on the submission, the Bench had expressed its intent to dispose of a petition seeking to cancel or defer the exams for students in the PWD

DUTA seeks PM Modi's intervention over exam
NEW DELHI
The Delhi University Teachers' Association on Tuesday wrote to the Prime Minister seeking his intervention in cancellation of the open book examination. It expressed disappointment that despite widespread opposition from students and teachers, the university has not heeded to their demands.

(persons with disabilities) category.

COVID-19 pandemic
However, the very next day after the order had been dictated and could be uploaded on the website, one of the judges came across a press report by Delhi University

where it decided to defer the exams "in view of the prevailing situation of COVID-19 pandemic."
"This came as a surprise to us, when just a day before, the respondent No4/ Delhi University had shown its complete preparedness for conducting the exam," the Bench said.
The court has questioned the university for failing to inform the Bench about "the developments that took place in less than 24 hours of the hearing in the petition, on June 26". The university stated that a family member of the Deputy Registrar (Secrecy) had tested COVID-19 positive and it came to know only after the case was over on June 26.

'Trying to provide two legal interviews a week'

HC disposes of Pinjra Tod activist's plea

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI
The Tihar Jail authorities on Tuesday assured the Delhi High Court that effort will be made to provide Pinjra Tod activist Natasha Narwal two weekly legal interviews of 30 minutes with her lawyer through videoconferencing.
Delhi government's standing counsel Rahul Mehra, appearing for the jail authorities, said there was no objection to Ms. Narwal, who is pursuing her M.Phil, sourcing books from outside as long as the materials are not against the Prison Rules.
Taking note of the submission, Justice C. Hari Shankar disposed the petition filed by Ms. Narwal, who had in her plea alleged that inmates were not al-

lowed to get in touch with persons outside jail through videoconferencing following an incident of violence inside the jail earlier this month.
Ms. Natasha was arrested on May 23, along with fellow JNU student Devangana Kalitha in relation with an FIR registered on February 24 over a sit-in protest at Jafraabad metro station against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act.
In her plea, Ms. Narwal has sought direction to the jail authorities to allow her daily access to advocates through videoconferencing. She also sought direction to the authorities to follow the Delhi Prison Rules, 2018 and allow access to books to complete her M.Phil.

OPPORTUNITIES

GENERAL

300 Bedded fast growing Hospital at Lucknow

URGENTLY REQUIRES FULL TIME :

- **SR. HOSPITAL ADMINISTRATOR** (Ex Army officer from Medical Services)
- **INTENSIVISTS / ANAESTHESIOLOGISTS** (DM/FNB/PDF in critical care)
- **INTERNAL MEDICINE** (At least 3 years Post PG Exp.)
- **NEUROPHYSICIAN & NEUROSURGEON**
- **INTERVENTIONAL CARDIOLOGISTS** • **PSYCHIATRIST**
- **CTVS SURGEON** • **ONCO-SURGEON**
- **HAEMATOLOGIST / HAEMATO-ONCOLOGIST**

Please send your resume to : hr@charakhospital.org
Call : 7408666666, 7704009631

इंस्टीट्यूट ऑफ बैंकिंग पर्सनल सेलैक्शन
(भारतीय रिजर्व बैंक, केंद्रीय वित्तीय संस्थाओं व वित्तीय क्षेत्र के बैंकों द्वारा स्थापित एक स्वायत्त संस्था)

IBPS INSTITUTE OF BANKING PERSONNEL SELECTION
(An autonomous body set up by Reserve Bank of India, Central Financial Institutions and Public Sector Banks)

अवसरपूर्ण अवसर है, हम पर भरोसा रखना है भारत In assessment, India trusts us

Website: www.ibps.in | In case of queries / complaints please log in to <http://cgrs.ibps.in/>

COMMON RECRUITMENT PROCESS FOR RECRUITMENT OF OFFICERS (SCALE-I, II & III) AND OFFICE ASSISTANT (MULTIPURPOSE) IN REGIONAL RURAL BANKS (RRBs) - CRP RRBs IX

The online examinations for the next Common Recruitment Process for RRBs (CRP RRBs IX) for recruitment of Group "A"-Officers (Scale-I, II & III) and Group "B"-Office Assistant (Multipurpose) will be conducted by the Institute of Banking Personnel Selection (IBPS) tentatively in September and October/November 2020. The interviews for recruitment of Group "A"- Officers (Scale-I, II & III) under the same process will be coordinated by the Nodal Regional Rural Banks with the help of NABARD and IBPS in consultation with appropriate authority tentatively in the month of November 2020. Candidates, intending to apply for CRP RRBs - IX should ensure that they fulfil the minimum eligibility criteria on the stipulated date as specified in the detailed notification issued and hosted on authorised website by IBPS.

Activity	Tentative Dates
On-line registration including Edit/ Modification of Application & Payment of Application Fees/Intimation Charges	01.07.2020 to 21.07.2020
Conduct of Pre-Exam Training (PET)*	24.08.2020 to 29.08.2020
Online Examination – Preliminary	September / October, 2020
Result of Online exam – Preliminary	October, 2020
Online Examination – Main / Single	October/November, 2020

* In case it is possible and safe to hold PET
Candidates are advised to regularly keep in touch with the authorised IBPS website www.ibps.in for details and updates. Before registering online candidates are advised to read the detailed notification and follow the instructions mentioned therein.
Mumbai
Date: 01.07.2020 **Director**

2 killed as speeding car loses control near temple

Accused flees spot, leaves behind car

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI
Two persons were killed and two minors were injured after the driver of a speeding car lost control and rammed people outside a temple in Rohini, the police said on Tuesday.
DCP (Rohini) P.K. Mishra said that the deceased have been identified as Harish (40), resident of Rohini Sector 26; and Vimla (35), resident of Rohini Sector 25.
The injured have been

identified as Anshu (5) and Suraj (11), both residents of Rohini Sector 25, and are undergoing treatment.
The police said that the accused fled the spot leaving behind his car. It was seized by the police.
The vehicle was found registered under the name of Rahul Sharma, a resident of Budh Vihar, Mr. Mishra said.
A case has been registered and two persons have been apprehended, the police added.

BJP presses refresh button in the Capital

Party to overhaul unit by July end

JATIN ANAND
NEW DELHI
Delayed due to the series of lockdowns since March, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has finally hit the refresh button in Delhi. A month after the appointment of its new State president, Adesh Gupta, the Delhi BJP will overhaul its State unit over the coming days in a month-long exercise.
Out of power at the State-level for over two decades, BJP's core group met here on Monday and reportedly told leaders in attendance that the national leadership had given them the task of ensuring that the party's Delhi unit had "the best organisational structure in the country" compared to any other State unit.
"This refresh has been long overdue. It would have happened right after the Delhi Assembly elections but could not because of restrictions related to the lockdown, which also delayed the appointment of a

'BJP, RSS fought for democratic system'
NEW DELHI
India is still under the ambit of a democratic system because the BJP and the RSS fought for it, the party's national general secretary Ram Madhav said while addressing a virtual 'Yuva Jan Samvad' rally here on Tuesday. It is necessary to keep discussing the memories of the Emergency so that lessons could be taken to strengthen the democratic structure and values of the country, he also said.
new State president. A lot of changes are likely with the national leadership keeping a close watch," said a senior party leader.
According to sources, the party's national leadership has asked the core group to ensure that only office-bearers with "actual" public connect and "in touch with the ground" both in terms of their contact with the people as well as party cadre should make the cut.

Back on the road



A boy gets his cycle repaired from a roadside shop in north-west Delhi. *SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

Murder inside Tihar jail: accused killed inmate to avenge sister's rape

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI
A day after a 21-year-old prisoner allegedly killed another, it was revealed that the deceased had allegedly raped the accused's minor sister six years ago, the police said.
The crime was an outcome of revenge, they said. Deputy Commissioner of Police (West) Deepak Purohit said on Monday, the 21-year-old resident of Dakshinpur stabbed another inmate – Mohammed Mehtab (27) from Nizamuddin.
During investigation, it was revealed that Mehtab was lodged in jail since 2014 for allegedly raping the 21-year-old's minor sister, who later ended her life. Ever



The accused stabbed Mehtab multiple times with a sharp object inside the Tihar jail premises on Monday. *FILE PHOTO

since, the accused wanted to avenge his sister's rape, said an officer.
The accused was lodged in jail in 2018 in a murder case and was shifted from jail number 5 to 8 upon request after a fight in jail number 5. On Monday morning, when everyone went for morning payers, the accused stabbed Mehtab multiple times with a sharp metal object.
Suicide prevention helpline: Sanjivni, Society for Mental Health, Telephone: 011-4076 9002, Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m. -7.30 p.m.

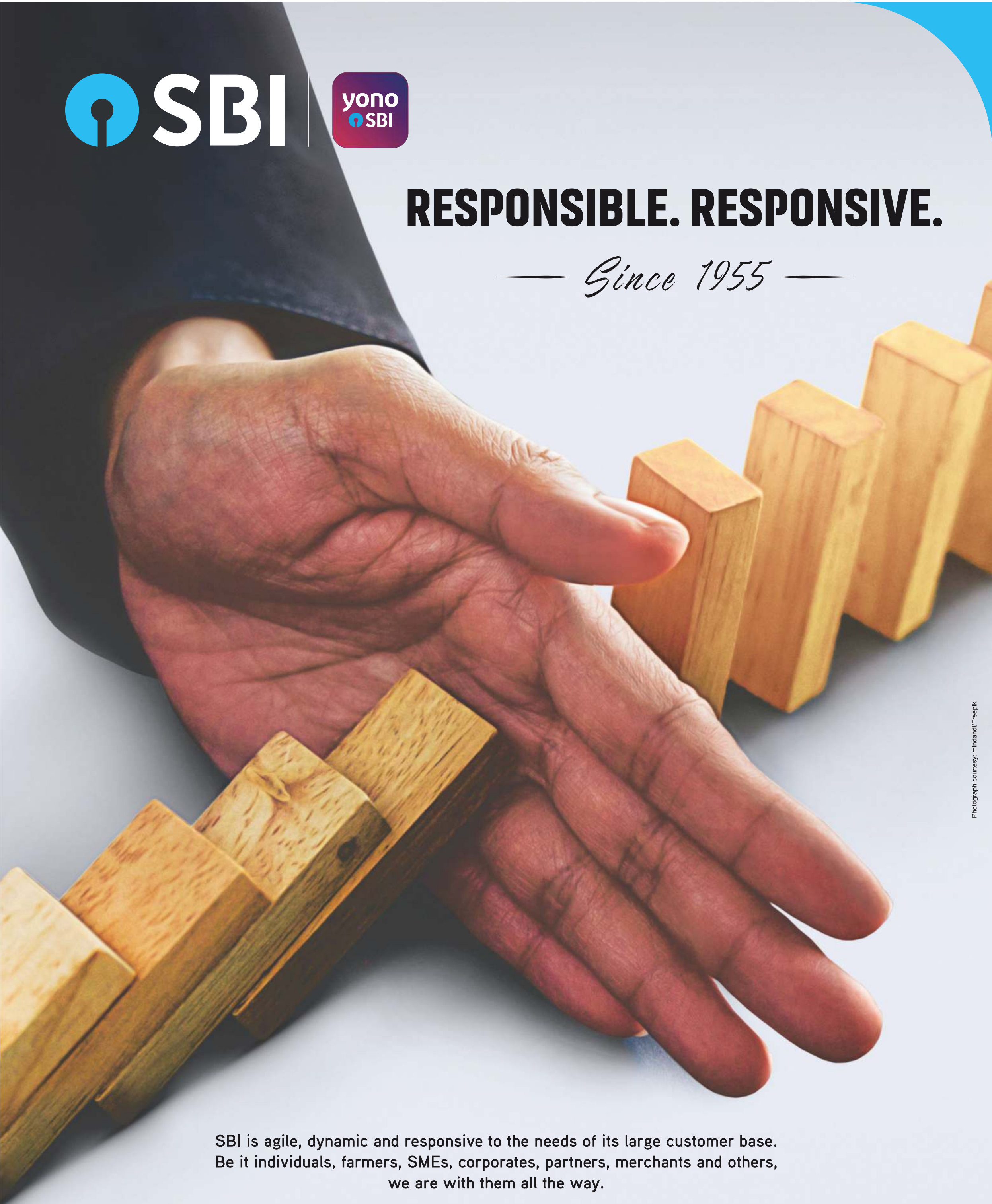
'Extend PDS benefits till December'

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI
The Delhi Roti Roti Adhikar Abhiyan (DRRAA) on Tuesday wrote to Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal urging the government to extend universal coverage under the Public Distribution System till December, in view of the ongoing pandemic.
"Only 37% of the city's population have ration cards... 55 lakh applications received under the Mukhya Mantri Corona Sahayta Yojna reflects the intense distress of people".
It also asked the government to ensure mid-day meals are served to all eligible children.



RESPONSIBLE. RESPONSIVE.

— Since 1955 —



SBI is agile, dynamic and responsive to the needs of its large customer base. Be it individuals, farmers, SMEs, corporates, partners, merchants and others, we are with them all the way.

Our digital journey has led to simplified, customised solutions for all our customers. YONO SBI App, our integrated, digital banking platform, enables users to access a variety of financial and lifestyle services.

More importantly, we feel responsible and thankful to the people who have reposed their trust in us since inception.

Today, we celebrate our 65th Foundation Day with all humility.

Stepping on the pedal to create a more vibrant and dynamic ‘India’

PROVIDING EFFECTIVE RELIEF MEASURES TO MSMEs

SBI's SME portfolio is about ₹2 lakh plus crore with 1.4 million customers, and MSMEs constitute a significant portion of the portfolio. When the Covid pandemic left its impact on various sectors, State Bank of India came to the rescue of the MSMEs immediately. MSMEs formed a crucial part of the announcements made under the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan' by GOI. Apart from extending deferral of interest dues and moratorium on Term loan repayments, SBI has been at the forefront in providing relief measures to SME borrowers affected by the lockdown, by extending 10% of fund based working capital limits as CCECL (Common COVID 19 Emergency Credit Line) and easing of working capital

SBI has always been at the forefront of assisting the MSME sector since 1956. We understand that the MSME sector is the key to revival of Indian economy and the bulwark of Atmanirbhar Bharat. We are closely working with all MSME units in our fold and beyond to offer them all the required support and creating a simplified digital solution in on-boarding and service. Our resolve and commitment is to support this vital sector that provides large employment and is a major pillar of our supply chain.



SHRI ARJIT BASU, MD
Commercial Clients Group & IT

FOCUSSED PRODUCTS FOR SMES

- Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY): Disbursed ₹34,978 cr in FY 2019-20 and ₹2,534 cr in the current year



- e-Mudra, end to end digital delivery model: ₹194 cr has been disbursed

- Prime Minister Employment Generation Scheme: Has sanctioned 10,057 loans



- Stand Up India: Has sanctioned 4,162 loans by FY 19-20 & 284 loans in the FY 20-21

SBI'S MAJOR PRODUCT SUITE

- Supply Chain Financing
- Pre-Approved Merchant Loan
- Export Credit



finance.

During the lockdown, to empower the MSMEs, SBI carried out several initiatives –

- SBI organized more than 1000 E-Town Hall Meetings from May to

date.

- Bank reached out to all the MSME customers to explain various relief and financial support measures extended by SBI
- Conducted 119 webinars for



An MSME unit

employees to educate them on the products for support to MSMEs.

- 50 State Bank Institute of Learning & Development & 2 Apex Training Institutes at Gurugram and Hyderabad conducted 841 webinars

during May 2020

SUPPORTING MSMEs AND BUSINESS ENTERPRISES

Responding quickly after issue of ECLGS guidelines by NCGTC, SBI rolled out the Guaranteed Emergency Credit Line Loan Product to support business enterprises.

The pre-approved product is made available within 5 days on sending notification to customer and acceptance. Under Guaranteed Emergency Credit Line (GECL), the bank has so far sanctioned GECL aggregating ₹19,000 crore to 4 lakh MSME customers and disbursed loans worth ₹13,000 crore.

Revamp of SME structure: SBI has created a new position of AGM SME across 80 Administrative offices to improve the connect with SME customers and function as a single point of contact.

A leading Bank in the country that enjoys customer's trust, SBI ensures availability of credible financial sector products with the help of its Subsidiaries and Joint Ventures. Their contribution has helped in distributing financial products from the branch network and digital distribution channels across the length and breadth of the country.

SHRI DINESH KUMAR KHARA, MD
Global Banking and Subsidiaries



One app for banking and lifestyle services - YONO

SBI's mobile banking and lifestyle app YONO (you only need one) is a one-stop-shop app that offers not just financial services but also a gamut of investment, insurance and shopping services.

Accessible on Android and iOS as well as on web, YONO allows a seamless omnichannel experience through a single customer ID and password. The app is designed to minimize clicks and maximize convenience. Therefore, "you only need one" app.

By reducing all banking paperwork, YONO also simplifies the lives of SBI executives, enabling them to focus their efforts and energy on serving our customers better.

SEAMLESS BANKING WITH YONO

Launched in November 2017 by the honourable Finance Minister of India, YONO has become popular among customers. In the 2.5 years since its launch, it has added many feathers to its cap. In July 2018, it won the Mobile Banking Initiative of the Year in India Award at the Asian Banking and Finance Retail Banking Awards (Singapore). In December 2018, it bagged the Best BFSI in Terms of Implementation of Digital Transforma-

GROWTH NUMBERS

- 24 million registered users
- 51 million downloads with 5 million logins per day
- Over 10 million card-less ATM transactions
- 6.5 lakh mutual fund transactions
- Over 70 lakh bank account openings
- Has issued more than 1.8 lakh credit cards
- Disbursed pre-approved personal loans amounting to ₹18,000 crore
- More than 8 lakh agri-gold loans to farmers
- Sold around 4 lakh life insurance policies

tion Award at the CSI IT Innovation & Excellence Awards (Mumbai).

NEW AGE DIGITAL SOLUTIONS

YONO plans to onboard 250 million customers by financial year 2025. It also plans to add many new products to its portfolio in the coming years, including end-to-end home loans and pre-approved car loans.



YONO relies on a range of new-age digital solutions. It uses data analytics for future credit assessment. The YONO team is now building a video KYC feature to further streamline and expedite opening of digital accounts, developing a farmer database with the help of blockchain technology, and creating a tool to authenticate inward cheques us-

ing machine learning.

WHAT YONO OFFERS?

YONO offers end-to-end digital-banking services, enabling customers to open a savings account in less than five minutes using their Aadhaar Card and without any paperwork, transfer funds in just four clicks, receive an overdraft facility against fixed deposits, and view their entire financial portfolio with SBI in one place.

YONO Cash - With YONO Cash, customers can withdraw cash from 2,70,000 touchpoints including ATMs, CSPs or merchant shops without needing to use their debit cards.

YONO DURING LOCKDOWN - During lockdown, YONO started a new pre-approved personal loan facility to help customers to borrow up to ₹5 lakh within 45 minutes and commence their repayment journey only after six months.

SIMPLIFYING SHOPPING AND PAYING BILLS WITH YONO BILL PAYMENTS WITH YONO

Through YONO's online marketplace, customers can directly shop from more than 80 e-commerce sites. YONO offers a host of exclusive and personalised deals to help customers save more as they shop.

To further simplifying shopping, the platform is now developing features such as debit on delivery that enables customers to pay directly through their bank account at the time of product delivery, without using their debit or credit cards.

YONO also allows customers to pay their bills, individually or through "auto-pay", across more than 20 categories including mobile recharge, credit card and utilities.

REWARD POINTS WITH YONO

Customers receive reward points for transactions made through YONO that can be redeemed for shopping, buying gift vouchers, recharging mobile/DTL and even for donating to social or environmental causes.

INVESTING AND INSURING WITH YONO

In addition to being a banking app, YONO is also a financial superstore. It includes products and services from SBI Life, SBICAP, SBI Cards, SBI Mutual Fund and SBI General Insurance. Paperless instant policies without medical check-up or branch visit, more than 9 general insurance policies (from health to car insurance), 16+ credit card variants, and thousands of ELSS, equity and DAF mutual funds—YONO makes all these and more available to its customers on a single platform. What's more, it also offers wealth and financial advisory. With YONO, customers do not need to switch between apps for their different financial needs.

YONO FOR FARMERS

Inspired by the overwhelming response to its flagship app, SBI launched

YONO Krishi, a platform designed especially for farmers, in April 2019. Available in eight vernacular languages, YONO Krishi provides simplified banking services, an online marketplace to buy/rent agri-cultural inputs and equipment, farming advisory, and investment and insurance products and services, including agri gold loans. Already, it has made life simpler and uncomplicated for scores of farmers, enabling them to spend more time on their harvest and sales.



Registered in March 2001, SBI Life has come to be known as one of the most trusted life insurance companies in India. In the last two decades the company has been a source of financial immunity to over 27.5 Million individuals and their families through its range of insurance solutions. With over INR 1.6 trillion of Assets Under Management, authorized capital of INR 20 billion and a paid up capital of INR 10 billion, the company's strong financial fundamentals and a consumer first approach have been its pillars of growth. Being digitally ready has helped the company serve its consumers meaningfully. In current times, right from Covid 19 fatalities to defence martyrs, SBI Life has been able to settle claims quicker through the company's hassle free claim settlement processes. The company continuously strives to maintain world class operating efficiency to better serve the consumers and communities across the length and breadth of India.

SBI'S DIGITAL INNOVATIONS

In sync with the government's vision to create a less-cash and a knowledge-driven economy, SBI has been spearheading digital innovation across its banking landscape through user-friendly and cost-effective payment solutions, multi-channel platforms and technology-enabled back-end operations.

- Aadhaar-Enabled Payment System (AePS) for cash withdrawal
- BHIM Aadhaar Pay for merchant payment
- BHIM SBI Pay (UPI) for instant real-time payment from person to person & person to merchant
- Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS) for payment of utility bills
- Doorstep Banking (DSB) services

SBI'S DIGITAL OFFERINGS

- YONO Business – An integrated digital platform for all business needs offering Corporate Internet Banking, Cash Management, Supply Chain Finance Unit, E-Forex and E-trade with user-friendly digital interface, real-time fund settlement and paperless transactions
- Loan Life-Cycle Management – Online Loan application & tracking facility for MSME borrowers
- Contactless Lending Platform offers easy access to loans for SMEs
- e-Mudra – Web application for Mudra loans
- Project Vivek - objective appraisal system
- Pre-Approved Merchant Loan - end-to-end digital pre-approved loan offer for current account customers
- Online Customer Acquisition Solutions (OCAS) - online platform to capture leads from tractor and agri-implement dealers and state government departments.
- E-Shakti - aims to digitise self-help group (SHG) account holders

Timings

DELHI

WEDNESDAY, JUL. 01

RISE

05:28

SET

19:24

THURSDAY, JUL. 02

RISE

05:28

SET

19:24

FRIDAY, JUL. 03

RISE

05:29

SET

19:24

DELHI Weather

max min

Delhi City

38 25

Safdarjang

38 25

Palam

40 29

Delhi Palam Today

40°C

A hot and humid day with partly cloudy sky. Light rain or thunderstorm likely at few area.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow

41°C

Rise in day temperature. A partly cloudy sky and hot day condition.

© Copyright Skymet Weather 2019
All rights reserved.

THE HINDU

DISCLAIMER: Readers are requested to verify and make appropriate enquiries to satisfy themselves about the veracity of an advertisement before responding to any published in this newspaper. THE PUBLISHING PVT LTD., the Publisher & Owner of this newspaper, does not vouch for the authenticity of any advertisement or advertiser or for any of the advertiser's products and/or services. In no event can the Owner, Publisher, Printer, Editor, Director/s, Employees of this newspaper/company be held responsible/liable in any manner whatsoever for any claims arising from damages for advertisements in this newspaper.

Punjab rules for 'Unlock 2'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHANDIGARH

The Punjab government on Tuesday issued fresh guidelines for phased reopening for 'Unlock 2' from July 1, and decided to reopen more activities in a calibrated manner in areas outside the containment zones.

However, school, colleges and coaching institutions would remain closed till July 31, a statement said.

U.P. Congress chief, workers detained in Lucknow, released

They tried to protest against the Monday-night arrest of minority cell leader

OMAR RASHID
LUCKNOW

The Congress cried foul after the police late on Monday arrested its Uttar Pradesh minority cell chairperson Shah-nawaz Alam in connection with the violence during the protest on December 19, 2019, against the Citizenship Amendment Act in Lucknow.

U.P. Congress president Ajay Kumar Lallu and other party leaders and workers were detained near the party headquarters, and later released, as they tried to stage a protest on Tuesday against the arrest.

Mr. Alam, 37, along with other party members, was picked up from an apartment near Kalidas Marg, where Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath resides, a little after 8 p.m., as per CCTV footage

U.P. Congress chief Ajay Kumar Lallu and other party workers during a protest in Lucknow on Tuesday. ■PTI

shared by the party. The others were later released.

After Mr. Alam was driven away by policemen in plain clothes, Mr. Lallu and other leaders entered into a heated debate with the police at the Hazratganj police station demanding to know his whereabouts and the charges against him. The police allegedly used batons and forced the

Congress workers to disperse.

DCP Central Lucknow police Dinesh Singh said Mr. Alam was arrested in connection with the FIR lodged at Hazratganj on December 19. "His name had come to light earlier... after gathering sufficient evidence, we have arrested him," he said.

According to the FIR, the accused faces several serious

charges including rioting, attempt to murder and criminal conspiracy. The police had recently filed the chargesheet in the case. However, Mr. Alam was not named in the FIR or the chargesheet.

Police criticised

Mr. Lallu lashed out at the police for the manner in which Mr. Alam was arrested and the use of force on party workers afterwards. "They have forgotten their oath under the pressure of their political masters," he said.

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said the police action was oppressive and undemocratic. "BJP government can make U.P. police a tool of oppression to stop other parties from raising their voice, but not our party," she tweeted.

Copycat robberies on KMP expressway

All victims were travelling towards Manesar; police clueless

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GURUGRAM

Three families travelling with women and children have been robbed of cash and jewellery at gunpoint on the Kundli-Manesar-Palwal expressway over the last 10 days in copycat incidents. The police suspect the same gang is behind the three robberies, but there has been no breakthrough.

In all the three cases, the families, travelling in cars, were forced to pull over after the iron nails strewn on the

road caused the tyres to burst. Speaking to *The Hindu* over phone, the victims recalled how five-six armed young men, their faces covered, walked up to them from different directions, held them at gunpoint and fled the spot after robbing them in a few minutes time.

All the victims were travelling towards Manesar and the robbery took place some distance from the toll on the expressway at Palwal.

Om Prakash, 61, was travelling from Lucknow to Kot-

putli with his wife, daughter-in-law and children on June 23 around 3 a.m. when the tyres of their vehicle burst near Palwal. The robbers took away the women's jewellery and ₹85,000 cash.

Rajender, a transporter from Gurugram, was returning home with his family on June 26 around 10 p.m. when they were robbed.

On June 20, cab driver Anuj was going to Rajasthan with his family when the robbers struck. They were robbed of cash and jewellery.

HIV-positive children pick care home as best bet

Vulnerable to COVID-19, they decided to stay back when schools closed in March

SIB KUMAR DAS
BERHAMPUR

Showing extreme patience and guts, 52 vulnerable HIV positive children have stayed back at the Shradhdha Sanjivani Child Care Home (SSCCH) in Odisha's Gopalpur since March 12 to save themselves from added danger of COVID-19 infection.

"During this COVID-19 pandemic, reports of violation of institutional as well as home quarantine norms are coming up from everywhere. These quarantine violators

should learn from these children," said Lokanath Mishra, founding member of SSCCH. The 52 HIV positive inmates of SSCCH are in the age group of 5 to 15 years. Twenty-six of them are girls.

Low immunity

As lowered immunity due to HIV infection makes these positive children extremely vulnerable to COVID-19 infection, they were completely cloistered at SSCCH, when their schools closed down from March 12 due to CO-

VID-19 pandemic. Seven other inmates, who had visited their relatives or parents at that time, were asked to stay back where they were.

Along with these children, staff members of this special care home also decided to reduce their outside contact to the extreme so that they do not become carriers of COVID-19 to these vulnerable children.

Superintendent of the institute, Akash Guru said, since March eight staff members, including him, have al-

so tried to make these vulnerable children their family.

Any person including the doctor and part time educator, adhere to strict measures of sanitation during every entry from outside.

When asked, do the children feel any boredom or tension because of staying away from home and families for long period, Mr. Mishra said, "We try to keep them engaged throughout the day in different activities to make them forget about their woes."

Two policemen on patrol murdered in Haryana

Eight teams formed to nab the culprits

ASHOK KUMAR
GURUGRAM

Two policemen on night patrolling in Sonapat's Baroda police station area were stabbed to death in the early hours of Tuesday. Eight teams have been constituted to investigate the case.

Constable Ravinder and SPO Kaptan were posted at Butana police post. Passers-by spotted the bodies in a pool of blood around 5 a.m. and informed the police. The two were found murdered around 500 metres from the post. While one of the bodies was lying on the road, the other was found in the bushes at some distance.

Director General of Police, Haryana, Manoj Yadava and Additional Director General of Police, Rohtak Range, Sandeep Khirwar visited the crime scene. Mr. Yadava said the incident took place between midnight and 2.30 a.m. He said there were signs of scuffle as well. The DGP said that eight

teams were constituted to investigate the case and expressed the hope that the culprits would be arrested soon.

Mr. Khirwar said the police's priority was to bring the culprits to book and ensure justice for the deceased.

Multiple stab wounds

Sonapat Superintendent of Police Jashandeep Singh said that autopsy reports revealed multiple stab wounds. He said the police had got certain clues and were working on them. Mr. Singh confirmed that the two were not carrying weapons during patrolling duty.

Haryana Rajya Sabha MP Deepender Singh Hooda, in a tweet, demanded that the deceased be granted the status of martyrs. Mr. Hooda said the National Crime Records Bureau figures for the past two years suggested that there was "jungle raj" in Haryana.

CLASSIFIEDS MART

TO ADVERTISE:

www.thehinduads.com

011-43579738 • 43579797

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE
BE it known to the public at large including, the concerned persons that my Clients, Mr. Kanwar Choudhary and Mr. Rishiraj Choudhary are the lawful & absolute owner of the property bearing No. 15, undivided share of Khazana No. 40, Min. Village-Shafli, New Delhi-110074 which is legally owned by my client(s) through/vidie Gift Deed dated 06.09.2008 duly registered in the registration no. 13683 in addl. book No. 1 Vol no 8786. It is notified that there seems some power of attorney related with powers regarding the upkeep of my client's said property purported to be issued by my client's is being circulated in the public with an intend to misuse the same. It is emphasized there existed no such valid attorney except one power of attorney in favour of Mr. Balraj Singh giving limited powers attested by public valid notary regn. Entry no. 3998 dated 15.11.2017 for up keep of the property in question. However, the same has also been cancelled vide cancellation of attorney duly notarized having notary regn. Entry no. 7517 dated 13.03.2020. Thus no valid Power of Attorney related with the property in question is existing and my Clients are the exclusive lawful owner of the said property and no other person is authorized by them to act / transact in any manner on any of the issues, related with the property in question. Hence be it notified to public at large that any person (s) or /and identity (ies), attempting to transact / deal and / or dealing/ transacting including transacting of sale / purchase, lease/ license, mortgage, transfer of property or its possession in any manner, with any other person identity(ies) except my clients Mr. Kanwar Choudhary and Mr. Rishiraj Choudhary with regard to the above mentioned property or any issues related with the same, may do so at his/ his /her own risks and costs as any such transaction(s) through any alleged power of attorney holder shall not be any legal entitlement/claim/ right to anyone. IT IS NOTIFIED ACCORDINGLY.

MANOJ KUMAR (Advocate)
Ch. No. 563, Patila House Courts New Delhi - 110001.

SITUATION VACANT

Full Time Faculty Hiring!

1. UPSC Eng- Sc. Tech & History

2. UPSC/PCS Hindi All Subj.

Eligibility- UPSC/PCS interview (document req)

Full Time Content

1. UPSC/PCS (Eng/Hindi) - All Subjects

Eligibility- UPSC/ PCS Mains exam (doc. Req)

Send Your CV at rohit.singh@gradeup.co

PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, RAJAN Mahadevan (Existing name of spouse as per change of Next-of-kin POR/Service Documents) spouse of Sqn. Ldr. A.V. Mahadevan, resident of 2082, Prestige Kensington Gardens, Bristol, No.17, HMT Main Road, Jalalhalli, Bengaluru - 560013, have changed my name from Rajan Mahadevan (Existing name of spouse as per change of Next-of-kin POR/Service Documents) to Rajan Mahadevan vide Affidavit dated 24.06.2020 at Bengaluru.

LOST & FOUND

LOST MY CBSE certificate and Migration certificate class 10th year 2018 (Name:- Dishandeep Singh, S/O Jamal Singh) Roll no. 8186081 around Sanjay Enclave opp. GTK depot Delhi 110033. Contact - 9873054142

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE
Public notice is given to the general public that my client namely Sh. Ajay Mohammad S/o Faiz Mohammad R/o H. No.1584, Suwalan Darya Gang, has severed his all relations with his wife namely Nifor Dio Salaudin R/o - 1426, Chetta Nawab Sahab, Farash Khana, Delhi-110006, due to the reason that she has taken Khula (Divorce) from my client and has fled away with one boy namely Mohd Yasir S/o Sh. Mohd Fazl R/o H. No. 1648, Gali Sayyadan, Pahan Bhogla Delhi-6, leaving behind two minor children my client shall not be held responsible for any act of her, nor she shall be allowed to enter property No. 1584, Suwalan Darya Gang, which even otherwise belongs to the father of my client, and, my client has no share or right in that property during the life time of his father.

S.K. Dureja Advocate
Ch. No. 127, Saket Courts, Delhi-110017

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public is hereby informed that virender kumar has claimed to be owner of Land free from all encumbrance area measuring 0.0996 Hect. comprised in Khayat no. 103, Situated at Village Devla, Tehsil Dadri, Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar, Now Tuntun Shah and Brij Das intends to purchase land of land/Plot area measuring 40 sq yds each from the above land owned by virender kumar and both now wants to avail loan from Aadhar Housing Finance Ltd., by mortgaging said plots. If any person has any objection to the same then submit / intimate within 10 days to **Vikas Shokeen, Advocate, A5-18, Mianwali Nagar, PO Sunder Vihar, Delhi-110087** Thereafter any kind of claim will not be accepted.

MODERN COACH FACTORY, RAEBARELI

Tender No: MCF-RBL-AMC FEs-2020 Due on: 27.07.2020

Dy. Chief Mechanical Engineer/Safety, Modern Coach Factory, Raebareli, for and on behalf of President of India, invites ONLINE open e-tender based on single packet system from reputed firms through Indian Railways portal www.ireps.gov.in for tender notice no. **MCF-RBL-AMC FEs-2020 Due on: 27.07.2020** on prescribed format for the under mentioned work: **Description of work:** AMC of fire extinguishers at MCF/RBL for 03 years, installed at Factory & Township premises of Modern Coach Factory, Raebareli. **Approx. Value (in ₹):** 26,05,522.83 (Rs. Twenty Six Lakhs Five Thousand Five Hundred Twenty Two and Eighty Three Paise Only) **Earnest Money rounded off to nearest multiple of 100 (in ₹):** 52,100.00 (Rs. Fifty Two Thousand One Hundred Only). **Cost of Tender document (Rs.):** 3000.00 **Completion period from the date of commencement of work:** 36 Months (03 Years). • **Date and Time of closing of tender: 27.07.2020 at 15:30 hrs.** • Detailed Tender Notice, Eligibility criteria, Terms & conditions are available in tender document at Indian Railways portal: www.ireps.gov.in **Dy. Chief Mechanical Engineer/Safety**

Open tender based on Single packet system Tender Notice No. MCF/RBL/Tender/Bogie Assembly(Coil Spg.)/2020-21/C226 Dt:- 29.06.2020 is invited by Dy. Chief Mechanical Engineer/Bogie & Wheel, MCF/RBL through IREPS portal www.ireps.gov.in for and on behalf of President of India for the following work:- **Description of work:** Assembly work of bogie in Bogie Shop as per scope of work. **Approx. Value (₹):** 1,14,74,224.35 **EMD (₹):** 2,07,400.00 **Cost of Tender document:** ₹ 5,000.00 only **Quantity of work:** 695 Coach Set of Bogies (279-Coil Spring & 416-Air Spring). **Completion period of work:** 12 months or earlier. • **Period of submission of tender document:** From 07.07.2020 to 21.07.2020 • **Date & time of closing of Tender:** 21.07.2020 at 11:45 hrs. • **Date & time of opening of Tender:** 21.07.2020 at 12:00 hrs. • Detailed Tender Notice, Eligibility criteria, Terms & conditions are available at IREPS website: www.ireps.gov.in in tender document. **Dy. Chief Mechanical Engineer/Bogie & Wheel**

On behalf of the President of India, Dy. Chief Mechanical Engineer/Fur., Modern Coach Factory, Raebareli is inviting open **e-tender** (E-Tender Notice No. M-200/MCF/RBL/LHB/Air Brake 2020-21/F09, Date:- 29.06.2020) based on single packet system online through Indian railway portal www.ireps.gov.in for the following work. **Description of work:** Works contract for complete fitment of interior & exterior Air Brake Fittings/Activities in EOG type LHB AC/Non AC coaches with FIAT bogies as per scope of work for financial year 2020-21 **Approx. Value (Rs.):** 89,77,911.04 **EMD (Rs.):** 1,79,600.00 **Cost of Tender document (Rs.):** 5,000.00 **Quantity of work:** 400 coaches for Air brake activity and 400 Coaches for FIBA Activity. **Work completion period:** 06 Months or earlier. • E-Tender submitted through online up to 11:00 hrs. on 22.07.2020. Manual offer will not be considered • E-Tender shall be opened on 22.07.2020, at 11:30 hrs. through online on <http://www.ireps.gov.in> • Detailed Tender E-Notice and Terms & conditions are available at Indian Railway IREPS website <http://www.ireps.gov.in> **Dy. Chief Mech. Engr/Furnishing**

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI) Notice no. MMDTS 20038 Rev-Nil dated 27.06.2020
Chief Design Engineer/Modern Coach Factory, Raebareli is inviting Expression of interest (EOI) for: "Alternate source of Development, Supply & Installation of Thermal cum sound insulation material for Roof, side wall End wall and under frame for LHB Coaches" Firms, interested, to participate in this project may visit the website www.mcf.indianrailways.gov.in for all relevant details about technical/commercial requirements. **Pre-bid meeting on 02.07.2020** on Google meet from 11:00 hrs and EOI complete in all respects should be submitted on **28.07.2020** from 10:00 hrs to 14:55 to Office of Chief Design Engineer, Mechanical Design Office, Administrative Building, Modern Coach Factory, Raebareli.

Serving customers with a smile

Office of the Executive Engineer, Transmission Line Maintenance

Division-VI, Bemina, Srinagar-J&K. Tele Fax: 0194-2492429

Email :- tclisdpd@gmail.com, psdijpdtcltdf@gmail.com

EXTENSION NOTICE-3

NIT No. TLMD-VI/ 01of 2020-21 Dt.23-04-2020

(Extension OF Dates)

Due to poor response the date of bid submission for above NITis extended as:

1. E-Bid Submission (end) date & Time

08.07.2020 upto 02.00 PM

2. Online Commercial and Technical e-Bid opening date & Time

11.07.2020 at 04.00 PM

3. Online financial e-Bid opening date & time (Only of technically qualified bidders)

Will be communicated to the Technically Qualified Bidders

All other terms and conditions shall remain same as per attached SBD, BOQ and other documents uploaded on site

S/d

Executive Engineer

TLMD-VI, JKPTCL Bemina Sgr.

No. TLMD-VI/341-43

Dated: 27-06-2020.

DIPK-NB-1083/20

WESTERN RAILWAY

MISCELLANEOUS ENGINEERING WORKS IN CHURCH GATE-VIRAR SECTION

Sr. DEN (South), Mumbai Central, Western Railway invites e-Tender as per details given as follows :

Sr. No.

Tender Notice No. & Date

Work and Location

Approx. cost of work (₹)

EMD (₹)

1. BCT/20-21/151, dtd, 30.06.2020

CCG-VR section : Casual renewal of 60 kg rails under ADEN (T/S) PL & (T/N) BVI section and sleeper renewal under SSE (P.way) BYR section.

50,35,203/-

1,00,700/-

2. BCT/20-21/152, dtd, 30.06.2020

CCG-VR section : Standardisation of Dead End under Sr. DEN (S) BCT Section.

1,30,35,823/-

2,15,200/-

3. BCT/20-21/153, dtd, 30.06.2020

CCG-VR section : Lifting & packing of track and recoupment of ballast to avoid flooding in monsoon under Sr. DEN (S) section

1,35,78,923/-

2,17,900/-

Date & Time of submission :

For each SI. Nos. – On 28.07.2020 at 15.00 hrs.

Date & Time of opening :

For each SI. Nos. – On 28.07.2020 at 15.30 hrs.

Note:

Please visit our website www.ireps.gov.in to download the tender document, corrigendum and further details.

Like us on :

facebook.com/WesternRly

Follow us on :

twitter.com/WesternRly

THE HINDU GROUP

Want to make a chocolate sandwich cookie?

Discover something new today.

Let your young chefs DO as they please on www.youngworldclub.com

YOUNG WORLD CLUB.COM

from the HINDU GROUP

Published by N. Ravi at Kasturi Buildings, 859 & 860, Anna Salai, Chennai-600002 and Printed by S. Ramanujam at HT Media Ltd. Plot No. 8, Uday Vihar, Greater Noida Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar, U.P. 201306, on behalf of THE PUBLISHING PVT LTD., Chennai-600002. Editor: Suresh Nambath (Responsible for selection of news under the PRB Act). Regd. DL(ND)-11/6110/2006-07-08 • RNI No. UPENG/2012/49940 • ISSN 0971-751X • Vol. 10 • No. 156

A ND-NDE

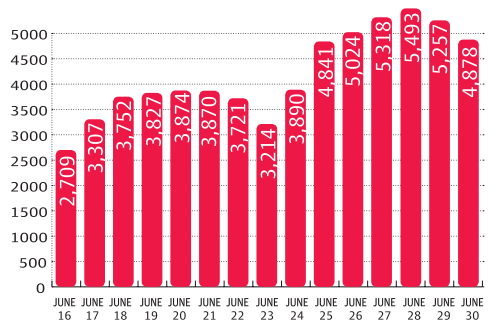
Maharashtra COVID-19 tracker

TOTAL CASES	NEW CASES	ACTIVE CASES	RECOVERED	DEATHS
1,74,761	4,878	75,979	90,911	7,855

DISTRICTS AFFECTED: 35

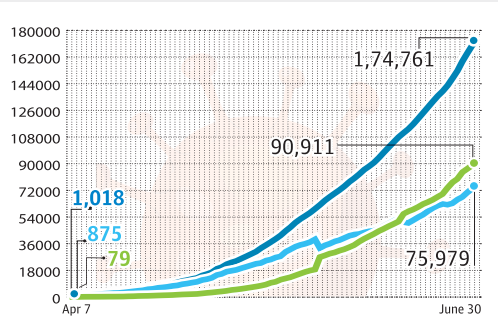
DISTRICT	CASES	DEATHS	DISTRICT	CASES	DEATHS
Mumbai	77658	4556	Hingoli	270	1
Thane	37630	956	Sangli	376	11
Pune	22327	752	Nanded	344	13
Aurangabad	5,328	256	Yavatmal	285	10
Nashik	4,226	222	Latur	331	18
Palghar	5858	108	Osmanabad	215	10
Raigad	3,980	95	Sindhudurg	219	4
Solapur	2,651	265	Buldhana	245	12
Jalgaon	3,415	234	Parbhani	99	4
Alola	1,536	76	Gondia	123	1
Nagpur	1,468	15	Beed	118	3
Satara	1,076	43	Gadchiroli	66	1
Kolhapur	846	11	Chandrapur	94	0
Ratnagiri	595	27	Nandurbar	175	7
Dhule	1,094	54	Bhandara	80	0
Amravati	566	28	Wardha	19	1
Jalna	552	14	Washim	102	3
Ahmednagar	431	14			

POSITIVE CASES OVER LAST 15 DAYS



893 (18%) of Tuesday's cases are from Mumbai

CASES TREND

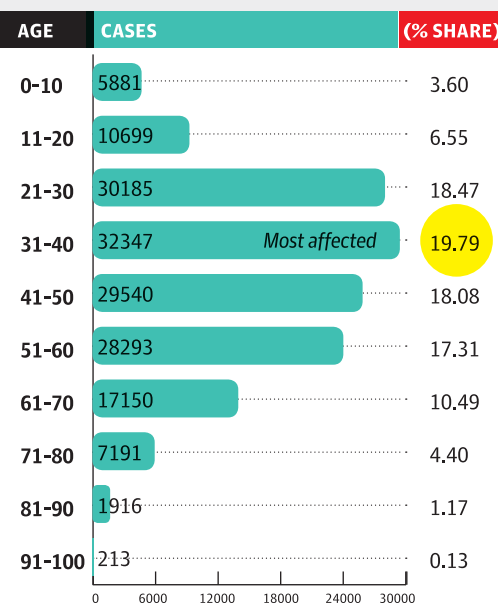


52.02% is the State recovery rate

MORTALITY RATE



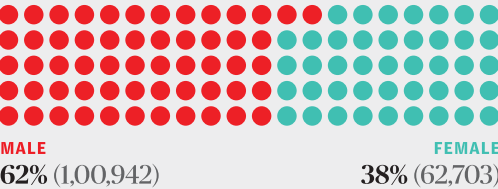
AFFECTED (AGE-WISE)



QUARANTINE NUMBERS



CASES (GENDER-WISE)



DEATH (GENDER-WISE)



70% of deaths due to co-morbidities

HELPLINE NUMBERS

Toll free number: 104/1075
Maharashtra: 020-26127394
National: 1075/1800-112-545/011-23978046
State helpline email id: ssumaharashtra@gmail.com

CITY-WISE HELPLINE NUMBERS

Mumbai city: 022 22664232
Palghar: 02525 297474
Mumbai suburbs: 022 26556799 / 26556806
Raigad: 02141 222118
Ratnagiri: 02352 226248
Thane: 022 25301740
Sindhudurg: 02362 228847

Source: Public Health Department, Maharashtra, BMC

MERC directs power discoms to make billing transparent

Consumers can opt to pay bills in three instalments, says Power Minister

ALOK DESHPANDE
MUMBAI

Following reports of domestic power consumers receiving inflated bills this month, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray on Tuesday said the Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission (MERC) has directed power companies to display transparency in its billing and resolve complaints.

Shock and dismay

Many consumers in Maharashtra including Bollywood actors had taken to Twitter to express shock over unexpectedly high electricity bills. "Taking stock of the rising number of consumer complaints related to exorbi-



Nitin Raut

tant electricity bills, MERC has directed power companies to show transparency in its billing procedures and redress the consumer complaints immediately," Mr. Thackeray said.

State Power Minister Nitin Raut said consumers can opt to pay their bills in three in-

stalments and those paying the entire bill amount will be given a 2% discount. Mr. Raut also directed Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Company Limited (Mahadiscom) to start a public awareness campaign.

He said, "Mahadiscom could not take meter readings on the spot due to the lockdown. As a result, bills for April and May were given based on the average bill in the previous months."

'Spike in consumption'

Mr. Raut said the inflated bills could be because of an increase in power consumption during the summer and more people working from home. "All family members

are indoors for 24 hours. Naturally, it will lead to an increased use of electricity in homes," he said.

Mr. Raut also admitted that several people have complained of exorbitant bills despite being away in their home towns. "The government will take real time meter readings in such cases and if the complaint is found to be true, the extra amount paid will be deducted from future bills," he said.

On Monday, the MERC directed power distribution companies to look into the complaints. BEST, Tata Power, Adani Electricity supply power in Mumbai, while Mahadiscom provides electricity to the rest of the State.

Maharashtra tally nears 1.75 lakh mark

State records 4,878 new cases; Mumbai's case load rises to 77,658 with 893 new cases

SHOUMJOIT BANERJEE
PUNE

Maharashtra inched towards the 1.75 lakh mark on Tuesday, with the State recording 4,878 new COVID-19 cases and its tally rising to 1,74,761. The State reported 245 more fatalities, pushing its death toll to 7,855. Of these, 95 were reported in the last 48 hours and the remaining 150 from an earlier period, State health officials said.

With a relatively low surge of 893 cases, Mumbai's case tally touched 77,658 on Tuesday. With 36 more deaths, the city's toll has risen to 4,556. Of the total cases in the city, 28,924 are active. A total of 13 fatalities were

reported from Aurangabad, taking the district's death toll to 256. Twelve deaths in Thane saw the district's total death count rise to 410. Nine fatalities were reported from Pune district, as its death toll climbed to 752.

State Surveillance Officer Dr. Pradeep Awate said the State's recovery rate stands at 52.02%, while its case fatality is 4.49%. A total of 1,951 patients were discharged on Tuesday, taking the State's total number of recoveries to 90,911. Of the case load in the State, 75,979 (42%) are active cases.

Pune district reported a surge of 637 cases as its tally soared 22,327, as per State

health department figures. Of these, the number of active cases has breached the 10,000-mark to reach 10,305. As many as 11,270 persons have been discharged in the district.

Surge continues

Along with Mumbai and Pune, the surge in cases in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) continued unabated. Kalyan-Dombivli reported another massive spike of 435 cases, taking its total case tally to 7,503. The uptick in cases continued in Thane, with the district reporting over 550 new cases, pushing its tally to 14,645. Navi Mumbai reported 195

fresh cases, taking its total case tally to 7,872. Mira-Bhayander and Vasai-Virar saw another bout of sharp spikes of 196 and 236 cases respectively to take their tallies to 3,592 and 4,729.

Aurangabad reported a massive surge of 221 cases, with the district's case load climbing to 5,328, with 2,723 among these being active cases. Dr. Awate said, "Till date, of 9,66,723 laboratory samples, 1,74,761 (18.07%) have tested positive. Nearly 23,000 samples were tested across the State on Tuesday."

He said 5,78,033 people across the State are in home quarantine and 38,866 are in institutional quarantine.

Chouhan govt. spying on our leaders: M.P. Congress

'It is targeting the Oppn. because it's scared'

SIDHARTH YADAV
BHOPAL

Madhya Pradesh Congress leaders on Tuesday accused the State government of tapping the phones of former Chief Minister Kamal Nath, his associates and several journalists, a charge denied by the BJP.

While observing "Black Day" to mark 100 days of the Shivraj Singh Chouhan government, Congress media in-charge Jitu Patwari said, "This government is spying on us. Former Chief Minister Kamal Nath, leaders and members of the State party committee, their phones are being tapped."

'Black day'

In view of such acts being committed by government officials, the former Minister asked "if it wasn't a murder of democracy and a black day".

Appealing to Mr. Chouhan to work in the "right direction" and not "without direction," he said, "The way you murdered democracy and bought legislators with the cooperation of the

Prime Minister, you became the Chief Minister. But now you should work on how the State should be run. The Congress is ready to support you in this." Mr. Patwari said the State government was scared and therefore targeting the Opposition. "Their phones are being kept on search. Phones of several journalists are also being kept on search."

Party MLA and former Minister Sajjan Singh Verma said it was being done in an unauthorised way. "There is no government order. There is no notice of the Centre. We want to warn the officials involved. We have your names...we will expose them." He said the BJP had 'toppled' the Congress government as it "waived farm loans, created employment opportunities and tackled the land mafia".

Rejecting the allegation, BJP State media in-charge Lokendra Parashar said, "Those who've indulged in corruption and injustices can't think beyond it. That's why they are making such baseless remarks."

U.P. plans door-to-door survey in Meerut division from July 2

Move prompted by increasing virus cases in 6 districts

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GHAZIABAD

The Uttar Pradesh government has decided to conduct a door-to-door survey in six districts of the Meerut division from July 2 in the wake of increasing cases of COVID-19 in the area.

During the drive, health department personnel would intensively trace people with Influenza-Like Illness and Severe Acute Respiratory Infection (SARI) in containment zones and would map SARI patients in non-containment zones. Special focus would be on mapping vulnerable sections such as people with co-morbid conditions, pregnant women and children below the age of 10.

Extra ambulances

Instructions have been given to district officials to make extra ambulances and hospital facilities available as the survey could result in a spurt of cases.

The decision to undertake the 10-day survey that will

be conducted in as well as outside containment zones was taken during a meeting in Lucknow conducted by U.P. Chief Secretary Rajendra Kumar Tiwari.



'Like polio survey'

"It will be done on the lines of polio survey to contain COVID-19 by increasing the number of samples. The teams will conduct a door-to-door survey and samples of those found symptomatic would be sent for testing," said Raj Kumar, Chief Medical Officer, Meerut.

According to the Chief Secretary's order, the district administrations of Ghaziabad and Gautam Buddha Nagar will have to conduct 1,000 tests through RT-PCR method and 3,000 tests through rapid antigen kits daily. For Meerut, a target of 1,000 tests through RT-PCR method and 2,000 tests through rapid antigen kits has been fixed.

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.00 HRS)

Forecast for Wednesday: Thunderstorm accompanied by lightning likely at isolated places over Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Odisha, Goa, Telangana and Karnataka

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	10.6	35.9	26.6	Kozhikode	25.8	31.4	23.2
Ahmedabad	36.0	29.0	25.1	Kurnool	34.0	26.2	23.1
Aizawl	9.2	24.6	18.8	Lucknow	35.6	26.2	23.1
Allahabad	11.1	34.6	26.4	Madurai	6.4	38.4	24.6
Bengaluru	1.2	29.4	21.4	Mangaluru	53.4	28.5	23.1
Bhopal	35.4	25.2	24.5	Mumbai	101	31.6	24.5
Bhubaneswar	18.5	35.6	24.1	Mysuru	6.5	31.5	21.0
Chandigarh	37.1	28.7	24.6	New Delhi	3.2	37.5	24.6
Chennai	1.8	37.4	26.1	Patna	15.1	33.0	25.8
Coimbatore	2.9	34.0	22.6	Port Blair	54.4	29.2	23.2
Dehradun	35.1	24.3	23.2	Puducherry	7.4	34.4	25.4
Gangtok	4.2	21.6	18.1	Pune	18.5	32.1	23.2
Goa	24.2	28.2	24.2	Raipur	0.6	33.6	25.5
Guwahati	1.2	34.7	25.4	Ranchi	32.2	23.0	23.0
Hubballi	26.0	22.0	18.0	Shillong	0.5	23.1	18.0
Hyderabad	29.2	34.0	24.1	Shimla	28.4	20.5	20.5
Imphal	31.5	23.6	13.2	Srinagar	30.0	13.2	13.2
Jaipur	41.9	28.0	24.0	Thiruvananthapuram	2.4	31.4	24.0
Kochi	66.8	31.0	23.0	Tiruchi	0.8	38.0	26.0
Kohima	11.6	24.3	18.4	Vijayawada	37.0	27.5	27.5
Kolkata	0.9	34.0	27.2	Visakhapatnam	2.1	34.0	28.0

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing							Yesterday
CITIES	SO ₂	NO ₂	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE	
Ahmedabad.....	19	69	37	60	---		In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Charhki Dadri, Haryana, recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 183 indicating a moderate level of pollution. In contrast, Aizawl, Mizoram, recorded healthy AQI score of 9
Bengaluru.....	7	13	28	53	---		
Chennai.....	6	26	104	79	---		
Delhi.....	4	24	30	126	---		
Hyderabad.....	8	27	9	34	60		
Kolkata.....	5	27	17	29	40		
Lucknow.....	4	2	22	125	---		
Mumbai.....	56	10	4	7	12		
Pune.....	14	5	79	15	15		
Visakhapatnam	12	34	27	28	50		

Air Quality Code: ■ Poor ■ Moderate ■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI)
SO₂: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.
NO₂: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.
CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.
PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Just shared trial results, says Patanjali

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
DEHRADUN

Replying to a notice sent by the Uttarakhand government, yoga guru Ramdev's firm claimed that it has not promoted any kit to treat COVID-19 but only shared with the media the successful trial of a medicine.

Patanjali Ayurved last week launched a drug called Coronil, claiming that it had cured within a week all COVID-19 patients who took part in a trial conducted at the privately-run National Institute of Medical Sciences in Jaipur.

The claim triggered a row with the Union AYUSH Ministry telling the herbal products firm not to sell the drug till it has examined the issue. Uttarakhand's Ayurved department said the firm had only applied for a licence to manufacture an immunity booster, and not a cure for COVID-19.

In its reply to the department's notice, the Haridwar-based company appeared to backtrack from its claim of finding a cure against COVID-19.

COVID-19 shadow on Ashadhi Ekadashi

Pandharpur to see muted celebrations

SHOUMJOIT BANERJEE
PUNE

With eight COVID-19 cases being reported from Pandharpur, the temple town will see a muted Ashadhi Ekadashi celebration on Wednesday.

With cases continuing to rise in Pune, Satara and Solapur districts, the State government and district authorities had scrapped the annual *palki* procession this year in which lakhs of *warkaris* (devotees) undertake the *wari* (pilgrimage) on foot from Dehu and Alandi (in



Holy journey: A police convoy escorts a bus carrying the padukas of Saint Dnyaneshwar at Alandi on Tuesday. •PTI

Pune district) to the Vitthal-Rukmini temple in Pandharpur. To ensure the continuation of this long-

standing tradition, the *padukas* (footprints) of Saints Tukaram and Dnyaneshwar from Dehu

and Alandi (in Pune) respectively were transported by special State transport buses on Tuesday. The garlanded buses, with a few *warkaris*, including descendants of the saints, set off from Pune to Pandharpur in the afternoon and reached Solapur in the evening.

Route not revealed

To dissuade *warkari* participation, the Pune district administration had earlier decided not to reveal the route of the convoy. In keeping with tradition, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray will be reaching Pandharpur on Tuesday night to perform

Other than the Chief Minister, no elected representative from the district will be allowed near the temple premises

POLICE OFFICIAL

the *puja* early on Wednesday at Vitthal-Rukmini temple.

Solapur is the worst-hit district in the Pune division, with more than 260 COVID-19 deaths and over 2,550 cases, of which over 730 are active ones.

Stringent regulations

As a number of areas near Vitthal-Rukmini temple premises have been designated as 'containment

zones', police authorities and district administration officials will be stringently regulating Wednesday's festivities. "Other than the Chief Minister, no elected representative from the district will be allowed near the temple premises. We are actively dissuading everybody from attempting to gather near the temple in the wake of the rising novel coronavirus cases," said a police official.

The then chief minister Devendra Fadnis performed the *puja* in 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2019. Following the Maratha quota agitation, he could not do so in 2018.



States hold the key

In Unlock 2, finely-tuned strategies for disease control and expansion of activity are needed

The Home Ministry’s orders relaxing the lockdown in the Unlock 2 phase until July 31 provides for a wider resumption of activity in areas other than containment zones, while retaining, appropriately, the prohibition on mass gatherings. After the first phase of the national lockdown, the handling of the pandemic, crucially testing, tracing, quarantining and treating sicker patients to reduce infection spread and mortality, has come to depend on the capacity of individual States. India’s current case total, including 3,47,326 people who recovered and 17,403 who died, is in excess of half-a-million. With no prediction for when COVID-19 could peak, the latest announcement casts a heavy responsibility on the States. They are, of course, empowered to impose additional restrictions outside containment zones without impeding inter- and intra-State movement of people and goods. Some of them have learnt that community-level monitoring of influenza-like fever and respiratory illness and testing in a focused manner shows higher positivity rates; good serological testing in containment zones would add insight on the overall state of infections. Such fine-tuning of strategies, together with access to testing where indicated, will be crucial in the unlock phases. States must also realise that more activity could bring more patients to hospitals, which are already stretched in terms of fatigued health staff and available beds. Targeted lockdowns for smaller areas, and measures to encourage healthy behaviour hold the key to lower the incidence of cases. Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal with a large caseload have extended their lockdown until July 31, a period that should be used to distribute masks to all residents, and ensure that the message of face-covering and distancing leads to full compliance.

Getting infection spread under control early should make it possible for the Centre to put in place a good system to handle domestic emergency travel, and facilitate more inward and outbound movement of stranded individuals. Several senior citizens have been caught abroad with inadequate access to health care and drugs due to the pandemic, especially in the U.S. Workers too are trapped in many countries. Within India, regulations that do not aid working from home need to be modified: they treat electronic equipment as non-essential and unavailable from e-commerce channels because of delivery restrictions in some cities. Self-certification for bank accounts has become due in the new financial year and should be postponed or handled online. Though the Centre has extended the provision of free foodgrain to 80 crore people for five more months, the quantum of rations at five kilos of grain and one kilo of pulses falls short of what families need in a month. In coming weeks, these social imperatives need to be addressed, while undertaking the formidable task of halting the upward trajectory of infections and deaths.

Control, not delete

Despite privacy issues with many apps, linking them to national security concerns is puerile

Citing concerns to both data security and national sovereignty, the Indian government on June 29 announced it would block 59 widely used apps, most linked to Chinese companies. These include the popular video-sharing social networking app TikTok, a mobile browser called UC Browser, and a file-sharing app called SHAREit. What is common to all three is their wide user base in India, with each claiming more than 100 million monthly active users, and their origins in China. Explaining the ban, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology cited “the emergent nature of threats” posed by the apps and “information available” that they are engaged in activities “prejudicial to sovereignty and integrity of India, defence of India, security of state and public order”. The apps, according to the Ministry, had been reported for “stealing and surreptitiously transmitting users’ data in an unauthorized manner to servers which have locations outside India”, which “impinges upon the sovereignty and integrity of India”. From the perspective of data security and privacy, there is indeed a strong case to be made to more strictly regulate apps that handle vast amounts of user data. Such a move was surely long overdue.

But the government might have done the right thing for the wrong reasons. The timing of the move, coupled with the fact that it has chosen to block the apps outright, rather than ensure they were complying with the law, suggests the ban is less motivated by privacy concerns than about sending a message to China amid the tensions along the border. After all, privacy and data security concerns are not limited only to Chinese apps. Concerns about many of these apps are hardly new, and the move to block them comes after these apps had already amassed hundreds of millions of users in India. If sending a message about China is the motivation, the ban is more signalling than substance. It may help the government show the public it is taking China on, even if it will have no impact on deterring Chinese behaviour on the border, which will require a tough diplomatic and military response. The tensions on the border, as well as the COVID-19 pandemic, have ignited a much-needed debate on India’s economic dependencies on China. India remains reliant on Chinese products in several critical and strategically sensitive sectors, from semiconductors and active pharmaceutical ingredients to the telecom sector, where Chinese vendors are involved not only in India’s 4G network but in on-going 5G trials as well. India faces tough choices going forward in dealing with its deep economic embrace of China. Hitting the delete button on social media and gaming apps barely scratches the surface of the problem.

In ending stand-off, magnanimity must prevail

India’s border dispute with China calls for peaceful resolution, and has no place for moral outrage or military might



R. SUDARSHAN

India’s oft-quoted mantra when it comes to international relations has been *vasudhaiva kutumbakam* (the earth is our only family). It is not in India’s DNA, so to speak, to demonise any country in its neighbourhood, including China, South Asia and South East Asia, all the way to Indonesia; that is because of long-standing civilisational ties. When Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke in Shanghai just five years ago, in 2015, he recounted to the Indian community living there how China’s President Xi Jinping took him to his native village in Xian province and showed him the book written by the seventh century Buddhist monk, Xuanzang, whose travels connected the birthplaces of both leaders. This was symbolic, he said of the bond between India and China in terms of *aatmiata* (soulful intimacy), *nikatata* (closeness) and *bhaichaara* (solidarity). There could not be more genuine and sincere affirmation of the spirit of friendship.

Keep a cool head

Presently, India is on the brink of regarding China as Enemy Number One. This has happened because of a bloody, hand-to-hand combat, without firearms, between Indian and Chinese soldiers in the Galwan Valley in Ladakh, which left 20 Indian soldiers dead and many more wounded. It may never be known how many Chinese soldiers died or were injured. These deaths on the frontier are a tragic break in an admirable re-

cord of avoiding casualties on both sides, despite face-offs on numerous occasions, along a long frontier between India and China. Both sides have accepted that the border between the two countries must be settled by agreement for the sake of peace.

China has refused to recognise the McMahon line and the demarcation of boundaries done by the British colonial power. Pending a final settlement of the boundary, India and China signed the Agreement on the Maintenance of Peace and Tranquillity along the Line of Actual Control in the India-China Border Areas, in 1993. Another similar agreement (Agreement on Confidence Building Measures in the Military Field along the Line of Actual Control in the India-China Border Areas), signed in 1996 contains a specific clause related to the use of firearms by both sides: “Neither side shall open fire, cause bio-degradation, use hazardous chemicals, conduct blast operations or hunt with guns or explosives within two kilometres from the Line of Actual Control. This prohibition shall not apply to routine firing activities in small arms firing ranges.”

Apparently, this provision was respected by both sides during the clash on June 15. Tragically, they fought much more barbarically, with nail-studded sticks, knives and stones, causing inhuman suffering. This incident threatens unofficial partition of territories that has stood the good test of time: Aksai Chin is claimed by India, but China, de facto, rules; China claims Arunachal Pradesh, but India, constitutionally, rules.

Will it ever be possible to resolve the boundary dispute, which is at the root of the conflict? And if so, how? The dispute cannot be resolved by going to war. No war has permanent winners. No losers can



AFP

willingly accept defeat. The only way to resolve disputes, in post-nuclear times, is through negotiations, as equal powers, with mutual respect.

China’s record

During his visit to India in April 1960, China’s Foreign Minister Zhou Enlai made a proposal to settle the boundary dispute. It was rejected by Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. In hindsight, history must record that as a lost opportunity which has had tragic consequences.

Today, China regards itself as a superpower in the making, which implies that negotiation will be condescending, tantamount to “my way or the highway”. The more China feels beleaguered, the more intransigent it is likely to be in negotiations to resolve the border dispute with India. China has flexed its muscle. It refused to recognise the authority of the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA), established under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). The PCA rejected China’s legal claims. It ruled that China had breached its obligations under the Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea and Article 94 of UNCLOS concerning maritime safety, and that China violated international obligations. China has not paid any heed to international opinion that supports

unimpeded commerce, freedom of navigation, overflights, and peaceful resolution of disputes in the South China Sea. The same hubris has made China more intolerant of infrastructure built by India, while it continues to build its own along that frontier.

Weighing in on the options

Should India counter China, tit for tat, by adopting a posture of aggression? Or should India redouble its diplomatic efforts to counter China’s intransigence with the support from Japan, Australia, the United States, Russia, and other countries, including those disputing China’s claims in the South China Sea?

What must matter to India is whatever is good for its people. Focusing on strengthening military might, when the economy is suffering and COVID-19 is taking its toll, will not be wise. Nor is it wise to call for a boycott of Chinese imports. Sanctions and boycotts are justifiable only when there is strong moral justification. Boycott of South Africa during the Apartheid period was justified and it served its purpose in hastening South Africa’s turn to equality and democratic governance. Arguably, there is moral justification for sanctions against Israel if it expands its illegal settlements in the West Bank and Palestine territories. Moral outrage has been triggered by actions of regimes in South Africa and Israel. But India’s border dispute with China calls for peaceful resolution, not moral outrage.

It is understandable, in the immediate aftermath of the sacrifice made by India’s soldiers, that nationalist ferment will come to fore. As has happened with other incidents when sovereignty seemed to have been transgressed, this one also will run its course. If India

boycotts goods from China, it will hurt itself more and barely make a dent in China’s economic prospects. India is lauded as the pharmacy of the world because it is able to import essential raw materials from China. India’s sports goods exports are likewise dependent on imports from China. The world buys Chinese goods because their quality and price are compelling. It has been reported that Steve Jobs wanted to change the iPhone screen barely three days before its formal launch. China’s factory that assembled the phone for Apple mobilised its workforce to get the screens replaced in quick time. India should emulate China in its manufacturing practices and agility to adapt to international demand. There is little parity between India and China in trade terms; there is much more parity in military might, at present, compared to the 1960s.

The home watch

It is unfortunate that in many cities in India, people from the North-east, who have features resembling Chinese, have been ostracised. India must be on guard, in the aftermath of current tensions with China, not to unleash any kind of hostility against anyone, especially resident Chinese nationals. India must learn the hard lesson, which it did not in 1962, that warm and gushing expressions of friendship towards China will not stop hostilities; only pragmatic and shrewd diplomacy can do that. Oscillating to the opposite end and attacking China as the enemy is not wise.

R. Sudarshan is Dean of the School of Government and Public Policy, O.P. Jindal Global University, Sonapat, Haryana. Previously, he was a policy adviser for Governance and Justice in the United Nations Development Programme

PCR testing is a double-edged sword

In order to avoid blind reliance on the result for COVID-19, clinical diagnosis by specific criteria should be popularised



M.S. SESHADRI & T. JACOB JOHN

The government has allowed SARS-CoV-2 polymerase chain reaction (PCR) testing in many government and private laboratories. In January there was one laboratory (National Institute of Virology, Pune) but today there are 1,000. Test validity depends on laboratory quality. Mechanisms to ensure internal quality control and external quality assessment are urgently required.

The boon and bane of PCR testing are in its capacity to amplify even one viral gene segment in the sample to generate a detectable signal – a positive test; it is a boon because it accurately detects the presence of virus but a bane because it is prone to false negative and false positive results.

Follow protocol

When a laboratory handles several samples, cross-contamination must be avoided. During sample preparation for testing, if even one gene segment falls into the tube from the laboratory environment, it will be amplified and the test will be positive – but, false positive. It points to the lack of meticulous attention to protocol while processing samples, some with and others

without the viral genes. A laboratory technician’s proficiency is integral to quality assurance. In reliable laboratories, a positive result means that the person whose sample was tested was indeed infected. For reliability, only laboratories under quality assurance should do testing.

Ensure quality

Here is an example. A conscientious professional in Vellore, Tamil Nadu, scrupulously practising personal protective procedures, had to get the mandatory PCR test to get an e-pass for an important meeting in a neighbouring city. The authorised laboratory for voluntary testing, a private laboratory in another town, sent a technician to his house to collect a nasopharyngeal swab. Two days later he gets a “positive for COVID-19” test report.

The laboratory informed the health authorities who wanted him admitted in a COVID-19 quarantine centre, despite pleas for home isolation. With great difficulty he bought time for two days to get admitted in a reputed hospital for two tests on consecutive days, in the hospital’s nationally accredited lab. You can imagine his personal anxiety and his family’s anguish, apart from the expenses incurred. Both tests were negative; he returned home, missed his meeting, and lost faith in the epidemic management system. Had he been admitted in a COVID-19 quarantine centre, he might have



K.R. DEEPAK

been exposed to infected persons, the story turning tragic for no fault of his.

The first test result was false positive, which should not occur in any quality-assured laboratory. The selection of private laboratories has not been careful. There have been newspaper reports recently of a private laboratory in Amritsar turning out four false positive PCR results in as many days. After selection, quality checks of laboratories have been found to be woefully inadequate.

We wonder how many laboratories produce similar false positive results. How many of reported positive tests in asymptomatic subjects nationwide are false positives? And how many lead to a misfortune similar to that experienced by the gentleman in Vellore? There is urgent need to ensure quality assurance from all laboratories testing for the coronavirus infection. Erring laboratories must be disqualified at least until quality assurance is certified.

A false negative PCR means that

a person with infection was missed by the test, but that is in the very nature of PCR. The viral load is lower in the throat than in the nasopharynx. Hence throat swabs are falsely negative in 60% of tests and nasopharyngeal swabs in 30%, according to published studies. An incorrectly taken nasal swab may miss the virus altogether and lead to a false negative test.

The relatively high frequency of false negative results leads to gross underestimation of the epidemic’s magnitude. Moreover, traced contacts with false negative tests will not be quarantined but allowed to spread the virus, augmenting the epidemic.

Doctors should not be misled by false negative tests when COVID-19 is clinically diagnosed with specific criteria. The patient must be treated as COVID-19, and the PCR repeated. Globally, many patients with COVID-19 pneumonia who are PCR negative on the first swab have typical appearances of COVID-19 in a chest x-ray or CT scan. They turn PCR positive on repeat testing. Missing a diagnosis of COVID pneumonia just because of a negative PCR test is medical negligence.

Terms and differences

Contrary to the pervasive misconception that PCR alone diagnoses COVID-19, it detects only virus infection, not the disease. Most of the media report PCR positive persons incorrectly as cases. In medical parlance, case is “patient with

disease”. PCR positive but asymptomatic subjects during contact tracing are infections, not cases.

False PCR results highlight that blind faith in the laboratory test misleads the government, underestimates the real extent of spread and, at the individual level, it is a recipe for personal tragedy.

When a false positive result is suspected, the doctor should alert the authorities, who in turn should get the subject re-tested in an accredited laboratory. In case of discrepancy, the laboratory concerned must be closed and checked for compliance with protocols and record-keeping.

In order to avoid blind reliance on the PCR test result, clinical diagnosis by specific criteria, which is the only way to diagnose COVID, (D for disease), should be popularised among doctors. Whether or not a confirmatory PCR test is done depends on circumstances. During the rural wave of the epidemic, doctors should be confident to diagnose COVID-19 even without a PCR. If we fail to implement these correctly, we are rendering disservice to unsuspecting society and its members.

M.S. Seshadri is retired Professor of Medical Endocrinology, Christian Medical College (CMC), Vellore and now Medical Director, Thirumalai Mission Hospital, Ranipet, Tamil Nadu. T. Jacob John is retired Professor of Clinical Virology, CMC, Vellore and past President of the Indian Academy of Pediatrics

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

Digital strike

It appears that the Government of India has suddenly woken up to the fact that 59 Chinese apps pose a threat to India’s security and sovereignty (Page 1, “TikTok among 59 Apps banned by the Centre”, June 30). The government has also not explained how these apps were considered to be “engaging in activities prejudicial to the security of the state and public order”. It seems the government has acted in haste by pandering to ‘popular sentiments’.

B. SHIV KUMAR,
Hyderabad

■ App bans are notoriously hard to execute. Usually, app firms upload their official version of their apps on to the App Store and Play Store.

However, even when applications are taken down from these platforms, users will still be able to download their unofficial versions from the web. So, it would require Internet service providers to blacklist every host name and domain name associated with these apps. This poses further security threats and may be exploited by cyber criminals. A simple ban will not work. Since many of these apps are a part of routine life, relevant and similarly efficient alternatives are a must.

RAVI TEJA KATHURIPALLI,
Hyderabad

Awarding marks

The CBSE policy to choose in the case of students who have appeared in more than three subjects, the average of the marks obtained in best three performing subjects to

be awarded in the subjects whose examinations have not been conducted, and, for students who have appeared in only three subjects, the average of the marks obtained in the best two performing subjects to be awarded in the subjects whose examinations have not been conducted, may not be fair for many students. In our case, the lockdown happened after the English, physics and chemistry exams (for the science stream). The marks obtained in these subjects have practically no relation to maths and computers, the most scoring subjects for which the exams have been cancelled. Some students may be very good in physics/chemistry/English while others may not be so. Hence, totally ignoring the performance of a student in

a specific subject and awarding marks on the basis of some other subject does not seem to be justified. Therefore, the subject performance in maths, computers (or other subject exams that were supposed to have been held and were cancelled) should also take into account the average marks obtained in the internal exams. A better way may be to: calculate the average of the best two of the last three internal exams conducted by school (of the same subject for which marks are being awarded); make a comparison with the marks as in the present scheme (average of best two or three subjects); award the greater of the two. A re-exam is not a good option because there are around 250 schools abroad apart from the number of States in India. It

may not be conducive to hold exams on a wide scale. Second, students cannot be made to study the same course repeatedly for an indefinite period of time because they have to join universities and move on.

SAMEER SIKKA,
State of Kuwait

Custodial deaths

This is not the first time we have come across custodial deaths in India, but the gruesome death of a father and his son in Sathankulam, Tamil Nadu has shaken India’s conscience. One expects a proper inquiry monitored by the High Court. I am also reminded of the golden period when under the leadership of inspectors general of police in Tamil Nadu like F.V. Arul, S.M. Diaz and E.L. Stracey, the police were the real

friends of the people. Their ‘Ungal Nanban’ programmes were well-received. It is rare to find such officers today.

THARCIOUS S. FERNANDO,
Chennai

Season to resume

The proposed restart to the 2020 Formula One season is hard to fathom (‘Sport’ page, “Hamilton eyes Schumacher’s record”, June 30). With most of Europe and parts of the U.S. scrambling to reimpose restrictions following a resurgence of the novel coronavirus, this move defies logic. It seems rather desperate to run the races without fans, behind closed doors in a ‘paddock bereft of human contact’.

D. THOMAS PALOCAREN,
Vellore, Tamil Nadu



To read more letters online, scan the QR code

Utilise MGNREGA to the fullest capacity

The scheme should not be diluted in the name of the Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan



The role of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) as a lifeline for the working poor in rural India has been proved once again with the experience of the lockdown. In April and part of May, it was the absence of MGNREGA which accentuated rural distress. The Central government revised lockdown guidelines to allow MGNREGA work only from April 20, nearly a month after the nationwide lockdown was imposed, and released funds for it belatedly.

But once the money reached the States, the results are evident. Whereas the number of households who got work in April 2020 was the lowest in several years at 95 lakh, in May the number went up to 3.05 crore. Till the third week of June, 2.84 crore households had got work, much higher when compared to the same months last year. With an average 23 days of work and a daily wage of ₹200, households who got work earned an average of ₹1,500 a month. Even though this is meagre, it shows the potential of MGNREGA to bring work and relief, provided it is further expanded.

The Central government released ₹38,000 crore for MGNREGA work, of which 70% has already been utilised. With the return of migrant workers to their home States and with substantial numbers having completed the quarantine period, the demand for work is bound to increase. The remaining ₹8,000 crore fund available to the States is clearly insufficient. It is therefore essential for the Central government to release the second tranche without delay.

Work provided to few
Even in these months where there has been a welcome increase in workers who got work, it is extremely disturbing that as many as 1.82 crore workers who demanded work were turned back. According to figures available on the Ministry's website, in this fiscal year, 8.07 crore



"The government must ensure the release of funds on an emergency basis." MGNREGA workers in Viluppuram district of Tamil Nadu. ■ B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

workers demanded work, but work was provided only to 6.25 crore workers. Recently we heard the Prime Minister and the Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister hardsell the record of employment provision in the State claiming that one crore jobs had been provided in a single day. This is certainly a novel interpretation of statistics. What is the nature of the work? Are they permanent jobs? Are they one-day jobs such as work on MGNREGA sites can be? In U.P., over one crore workers had applied for work under MGNREGA, but more than one third of them were turned back.

Similarly in Bihar, which also has a large number of returning migrant workers, 12 lakh workers of the 41 lakh workers who applied were turned back. In spite of a legal provision of unemployment allowance not a single rupee in compensation has been paid. Now that the monsoons have set in, this issue becomes all the more relevant. During the rainy season even though demand is high, work provision is low. It is therefore essential for the Central government to ensure that States are provided with the funds to pay unemployment allowance to all workers demanding

work. In this context of the need to strengthen MGNREGA, the announcement of the Central government's "new" scheme, the Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan, to provide work to migrant workers in 116 selected districts, raises several questions. First, what is the criteria for selection? Why, for example, should the States of West Bengal and Chhattisgarh be omitted when reverse migration is particularly high in these States? Of the ₹4,794 crore spent between June 20 and June 28, Bihar received more than 50% of the fund. As noted earlier, Bihar has had a poor record of implementation of MGNREGA. The Bihar elections are scheduled for later this year. It will be a terrible travesty of justice if this scheme is designed to serve a narrow political purpose.

Second, according to the list of 25 kinds of work available under this "scheme" it is clear that almost every single one of them is already covered under the convergence programmes of MGNREGA. What is the new "skill mapping" required for this since this work is already covered under MGNREGA? The nature of the work is manual work, mainly construction

and earth work, including work to lay cables, ostensibly to take Internet connections to rural areas. It is unstated but clear that this will benefit private telecom companies.

Most importantly, how will this new scheme impact the MGNREGA work in these selected districts? There is no clarity on this critical issue in the set of guidelines issued by the Ministry of Rural Development, the nodal Ministry for this scheme. Last year, under MGNREGA, in these 116 districts taken together, an average of just 43.7 workdays were created, which was lower than the national average of 50 days. This poor record of provision of work may have been one of the reasons for the higher rates of migration from these districts. Instead of new schemes why should MGNREGA not be expanded to give work to all workers? This is a legal right, whereas the Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan has no such legal binding on the administration.

The scheme is primarily meant for migrant workers in those districts where their numbers are 25,000 or more. That means in these selected districts women who comprise a smaller percentage of migrant workers will be largely excluded. However, women in these districts had a high demand for work reflected in the fact that the average of women working in MGNREGA in these districts last year was 53.5%, which was higher than the average for the rest of India. So unless this work in 116 districts is in addition to MGNREGA, women will suffer.

Potential for MGNREGA
MGNREGA should not be diluted in the name of the Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan. The potential for MGNREGA to provide relief to the suffering of rural India should be utilised to its fullest capacity. This will also require a removal of the restriction of only one person per household to make every individual eligible. The cap of 100 days should be removed to expand it to at least 200 days. Unemployment allowance should be guaranteed for all those turned away from work. And importantly, the government must ensure the release of funds on an emergency basis.

Brinda Karat is a member of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) Polit Bureau and a former Rajya Sabha MP

Making trade more digitised

While different interventions have positively developed the port ecosystem, there are still gaps that need to be bridged



AFAF HUSSAIN & NIKITA SINGLA

India's exports in April 2020 contracted by 60% year-on-year. There was a 37% fall in the twenty-foot equivalent units handled by the Jawaharlal Nehru Port in April 2020 as compared to April 2019. The steep decline in world trade lays bare the significance of a more digitised trading environment, with minimal manual touch points.

With the pandemic, the slump in international trade is unpredictable. As countries slowly emerge out of this, new demand and supply chains will form, that will be located in countries that re-orient their existing trade structures.

Upgradation, digitisation, automation
Globally, digitisation of procedures and lower human intervention are the two major pillars that drive trade across borders. Post India's ratification of the Trade Facilitation Agreement of the World Trade Organization in April 2016, reforms focused on infrastructural upgradation, digitisation and automation. Schemes such as Direct Port Entry and Direct Port Delivery, and the Radio Frequency Identification system and Single Window Interface for Facilitating Trade, were all aimed at reducing the time and cost of clearance of goods. The Port Community System was aimed at seamlessly integrating all maritime trade-related stakeholders on a single platform. And e-SANCHIT (e-Storage and computerised handling of indirect tax documents) was aimed at reducing human intervention.

These and other interventions speak of the government's focus on effective logistics and smooth export-import (EXIM) procedures at Indian borders. This resulted in continuous improvement in India's Ease of Doing Business ranking, particularly in the 'trading across borders' parameter on which it ranked 68 in 2020. With the current crisis, ports across India demand a greater leap in trade facilitation measures to expedite the movement, release and clearance of goods.

While different interventions of the government have positively developed the port ecosystem, there are still some gaps that need to be bridged. These are particularly with respect to the standardisation and coordination of processes across ports, and awareness and acceptability of new initiatives among the users which depends on the

adaptability and ease of linkage between multiple systems.

Gaps to be filled
Some of the delay in moving to a paperless trade ecosystem can be attributed to gaps in the effective implementation of digital platforms. First, shortcomings in the functionality of the system and technical glitches result in limited use of the system or parallel use of hard copy. For example, the absence of a shipping line delivery order in customs and terminal systems results in usage of hard copy for cargo movement. Second, lack of connectivity/message exchanges between different stakeholders' systems results in delayed cargo clearance. Third, there are many issues with respect to training and capacity building amongst the users, restricting the optimal utilisation of digital platforms.

Like in the rest of the world, in India too the operations of multiple stakeholders in the logistics and trade ecosystem including customs brokers, shipping lines, freight forwarders, transport operators, port custodians, container freight stations and border management authorities have been restricted. This indicates the need to further augment the digital infrastructure in the trade ecosystem. With trade volumes contracting and economic indicators shrinking, the present crisis presents an opportunity to develop new systems and enhance existing platforms while at the same time changing the attitude of stakeholders on the ground.

In the last two months, different guidelines have been issued by the government, focusing on measures to facilitate and expedite the clearance process so that it is more automated, online and paperless. While some immediate steps are needed to survive the crisis, it is imperative to work on a permanent road map which addresses some of the gaps highlighted. Enhanced integration of systems and coordination between them should ideally result in exchange of messages and sharing of input data between them on a real-time basis. Promoting use of a multi-stakeholder single platform like the Port Community System can streamline EXIM procedures, moving towards a digitally engaged and enhanced trading environment.

These efforts will be instrumental towards improving India's trading ecosystem and achieving the desired target of Ease of Doing Business (ranking under 50) set by the Prime Minister's Office. The more digitised our trade facilitation infrastructure, the more immune we will be to future disruptions.

Afaf Hussain is Director and Nikita Singla is Associate Director at Bureau of Research on Industry and Economic Fundamentals, Delhi. Views are personal

Reviving SAARC to deal with China

Deeper regional economic integration will help India

PRABHASH RANJAN

As India-China border tensions continue to fester, a hegemonic China, as part of its global expansionism, is chipping away at India's interests in South Asia. This should be a major cause for concern for New Delhi. China's proximity to Pakistan is well known. Nepal is moving closer to China for ideational and material reasons. China is wooing Bangladesh by offering tariff exemption for 97% of Bangladeshi products, and has intensified its ties with Sri Lanka through massive investments. According to a Brookings India study, most South Asian nations are now largely dependent on China for imports despite geographical proximity to India.

Reinvigorating SAARC
Several foreign policy experts argue that India's strategic dealing with China has to begin with South Asia. In this regard, it is important to reinvigorate SAARC, which has been in the doldrums since 2014. In the last few years, due to increasing animosity with Pakistan, India's political interest in SAARC dipped significantly. India has been trying hard to isolate Pakistan internationally for its role in promoting terrorism in India. However, as Professor S.D. Muni argues, Pakistan is not facing any isolation internationally. India started investing in other regional instruments, such as BIMSTEC, as an alternative to SAARC. However, BIMSTEC cannot replace SAARC for reasons such as lack of a common identity and history among all BIMSTEC members. Moreover, BIMSTEC's focus is on the Bay of Bengal region, thus making it an inappropriate forum to engage all South Asian nations.

One way to infuse life in SAARC is to revive the process of South Asian economic integration. South Asia is one of the least integrated regions in the world with intra-regional trade teetering at barely 5% of total South Asian trade, compared to 25% of intra-regional trade in the ASEAN region. While South Asian countries have signed trade treaties, the lack of political will and trust deficit has prevented any meaningful movement. According to the World Bank, trade in South Asia stands at \$23 billion of an estimated value of \$67 billion. In-

dia should take the lead and work with its neighbours to slash the tariff and non-tariff barriers. There's a need to resuscitate the negotiations on a SAARC investment treaty, pending since 2007. According to the UN Conference on Trade and Development, intra-ASEAN investments constitute around 19% of the total investments in the region. The SAARC region can likewise benefit from higher intra-SAARC investment flows. Deeper regional economic integration will create greater interdependence with India acquiring the central role, which, in turn, would serve India's strategic interests too.

Domestic challenges
There are two major domestic challenges that India faces in revitalising SAARC. First, to reap political dividends at home, and for ideological reasons, there has been an unrelenting top-dressing of anti-Pakistan rhetoric and Islamophobia on the Indian soil. There's also a recurrent use of the 'Bangladeshi migrant' rhetoric. Such majoritarian politics influences foreign policy in undesirable ways. It dents India's soft power of being a liberal and secular democracy, which gives moral legitimacy to India's leadership in the region. This divisive domestic politics fuels an anti-India sentiment in India's neighbourhood.

Second, the economic vision of the Modi government remains convoluted. It's unclear what the slogans of *atma nirbharta* (self-reliance) and 'vocal for local' mean. The government's economic advisers contend that this does not mean autarky. On the other hand, the Prime Minister and his Ministers are stating that India needs to cut down its dependence on imports, thus signalling a return to the obsolete economic philosophy of import substitution. If this marks sliding back to protectionism, one is unsure if India will be interested in deepening South Asian economic integration.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi did well by reaching out to SAARC leaders earlier this year, but such flash-in-the-pan moments won't help without sustained engagement.

Prabhash Ranjan is Senior Assistant Professor of Law, South Asian University, New Delhi. Views are personal

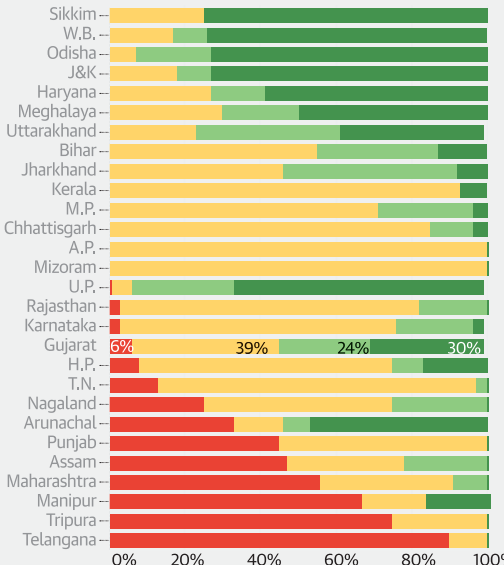


DATA POINT

The rural salve

The high levels of reverse migration recorded during the COVID-19-related lockdown led to a sudden surge in demand for work through MGNREGS in States where the bulk of the migrants returned. Sowing of kharif crops doubled this year following a massive increase in rural labour and an above average monsoon. These two factors led to levels of rural employment seen before the lockdown was imposed. By The Hindu Data Team

DEMAND FOR WORK | The graph depicts the % of districts where the no. of households which demanded MGNREGS work tripled, doubled, increased significantly or reduced in FY21 compared to FY20. While the demand tripled in many districts in W.B., Odisha and U.P., it reduced in many districts in Punjab, Telangana and Maharashtra

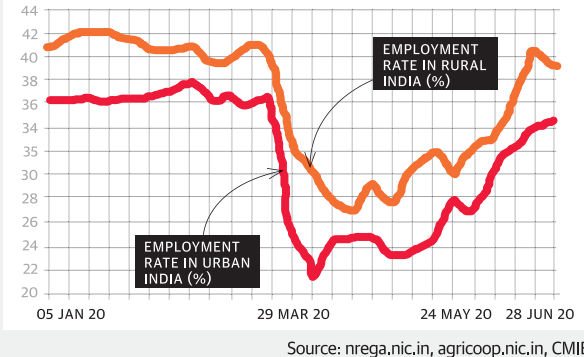


LAST WORD | The sudden rise in sowing, especially in cotton, has to be met with an equal increase in govt. procurement. If not, the glut in the market will cause prices to crash and profits to dwindle. Also, according to CMIE, though rural jobs have increased, due to excess supply of labour the wage rates will drop significantly. Thus, workers may earn less than they used to

SOWING SURGE | Farmers sowed 315.63 lakh hectares (LH) of kharif crops as of June 26, 127 LH more than the area usually covered by this time. In places such as Punjab, Maharashtra and Telangana, the demand for MGNREGS work was possibly muted due to a large increase in sowing

Crop	Area sown in FY21	Change over usual area	States with most increase in sowed area
Rice	37.71 LH	+5.66 LH	Punjab (+4 LH), U.P. (+2.6)
Pulses	19.4	+7.94	Maharashtra (+5.1), M.P. (+1.1), Telangana (+0.8)
Coarse cereals	48	+21.86	M.P. (+9.8), Maharashtra (+6.5), H.P. (+2.3)
Oil-seeds	83.3	+59.24	M.P. (+33.6), Maharashtra (+16.7), Telangana (+3.6)
Cotton	71.6	+32.46	Maharashtra (+14.9), Gujarat (+7), Telangana (+3.6)
Overall	315.63	+127.99	

BACK WITH JOBS | CMIE's data on employment rate show that the rural rate has bounced back to pre-COVID levels while the urban rate is still stuttering after a decent recovery following the unlock



The Hindu.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO JULY 1, 1970

100 mini-supermarkets in Fourth Plan

Mr. Ujjal Singh, Governor of Tamil Nadu, said here to-day [Coimbatore, June 30] that there was a plan to start 100 mini-supermarkets at smaller centres in the State during the Fourth Plan period and that sanction had already been accorded for starting 17 such mini-supermarkets at taluk centres and towns. The Governor who was inaugurating the third anniversary of "Chinthamani", the co-operative supermarket in Coimbatore, said that if the co-operative movement was to prosper along right lines and benefit the people at large, inefficiency and corruption should be stamped out. Special training must be imparted to employees of co-operative institutions in managerial skill, salesmanship and business techniques so that they could have a viable co-operative sector as an integral organisational part of the strategy for planned and rapid economic development of the country. Mr. Ujjal Singh said that the co-operative movement was based on the principle of a classless society where there would be no room for exploitation by those who were occupying positions of advantage.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JULY 1, 1920

Mr. Gandhi: Letter to Viceroy

Mr. Gandhi has sent the following letter [June 24, Bombay] to H.E. the Viceroy: Your Excellency - As one who has enjoyed a certain measure of Your Excellency's confidence and one who claims to be a devoted well wisher of the British Empire, I owe it to Your Excellency and, through Your Excellency, to His Majesty's Ministers to explain my connection with, and my conduct to, the Khilafat question. At the very earliest stage of the war, even whilst I was in London, organising the Indian volunteer ambulance corps, I began to intercut myself in the Khilafat question. I perceived how deeply moved the little Mussalman world in London was when Turkey decided to throw in her lot with Germany. On my arrival in India in January of 1915 I found the same anxiousness and earnestness among the Mussalmans with whom I came in contact. Their anxieties became intense when information about secret treaties leaked out. The Peace terms and Your Excellency's defence of them have given the Mussalmans of India a shock from which it will be difficult for them to recover. The terms violate Ministerial pledges and utterly disregard the Mussalman sentiment.

FROM PAGE ONE

Corps Commanders hold talks in Chushul

A similar consensus between the Corps Commanders on June 6 was breached following the violent clash in the Galwan Valley, which resulted in the death of 20 Indian soldiers, including a Colonel.

India's consistent demand has been restoration of status quo of the pre-May 5 positions and de-induction of Chinese forces along the LAC.

Contrary to disengagement, satellite images and reports have since emerged, showing further build-up of defensive positions by China in the Galwan area, Pangong Tso and Depsang plains in the last few weeks. The images show that in Galwan, China has rebuilt the defensive structures at the site of the clash where an observation post was earlier destroyed.

Free foodgrain scheme extended till November

Mr. Modi added that with the amount already spent since April, the total outlay for the scheme would go up to ₹1.5 lakh crore.

According to government sources, the next few months may see a slow recovery in the economy as the COVID-19 cases, as also mentioned by Mr. Modi, showed an uptick but with lower mortality rates compared to other countries.

“The low mortality rates are a result of taking the right decisions of lockdown at the right time and precautions of wearing masks, washing hands frequently and maintaining social distancing. In Unlock 2 we are seeing a lowering of the guard which is to be avoided. People must stick to the precautions as they did under Lockdown,” the Prime Minister said.

Core industry output contracts for third month

“But the decline in oil and gas and petroleum products shows that economic activity was not taking place in May, even though essential industries were allowed to function by then,” he added. He expected the decline to continue for several months to come, noting that daily mobility and petroleum consumption data for June had failed to come back to normal, although the lockdown was lifted.

“Many people are still working from home, many industries are still functioning below normal demand due to the pandemic. We are likely to remain in the negative zone for a few more months,” he said.

D.K. Srivastava, chief policy advisor at Ernst and

Young, was a little more optimistic, although he also expected the contraction to continue in June.

“The core sector data is on expected lines. The rate of contraction has come down. The decline will continue in June till the end of the first quarter, reflecting the loss of momentum in the economy although the lockdown has been lifted,” said Dr. Srivastava, who is also a member of the advisory council to the 15th Finance Commission.

“But I expect to start seeing a mild recovery, beginning from the second quarter,” he added, noting that electricity generation and energy products would be likely to lead the way in the recovery.

Banned apps to get chance to send clarifications

“We have been invited to meet with concerned government stakeholders for an opportunity to respond and submit clarifications,” he said.

While government sources said an order to remove all the banned apps was sent to both Google and Apple, industry sources confirmed that both companies received an order relating to removal of only TikTok as of Tuesday evening.

Helo, which along with TikTok is owned by China's ByteDance, said it was working with the key stakeholders for an opportunity to respond and submit clarifications.

Experts have said the move to ban the apps, which together are estimated to have over 500 million monthly active users in the

country, may have a significant impact on the Chinese firms.

“We need to wait and watch to understand the impact of banning these apps on the Indian economy as we are not sure about the anticipated counter from China. The economic impact on Chinese firms would, however, be significant,” Anand S., vice-president, TechVision, Frost & Sullivan, told *The Hindu*.

He noted that some of the apps banned were very popular in India.

For instance, the time spent on Tiktok in India in December last was more than the next 11 countries combined. “The fear that the implications could be followed in other countries is a bigger threat to the Chinese economy”, he said.

Sharp fall in reporting of non-COVID diseases

“There were fewer instances of people reporting diseases other than COVID-19 in hospitals. However, after May 3, there is again an increase in reports of other diseases but the latest data suggests that it hasn't completely normalised as compared to previous years,” said Dr. Sujet Kumar Singh, Director, National Centre Disease Control (NCDC). The IDSP is a unit under this body.

Dr. Singh, however, denied the possibility that fewer outbreaks were reported because COVID-19 was prioritised over all else and

monitors ignored other diseases.

A.C. Dhariwal, former Director of IDSP said behavioural changes such as the use of masks and restricted movement had led to a possible decline in several viral borne diseases, including H1N1, mumps and measles. “Distancing and lack of contact may have seen a decline in contagious diseases as well as say water borne infectious diseases,” he noted.

On April 24, the IDSP said nearly 9.45 lakh people from 734 districts were under surveillance for possible COVID-19.

19 cases in Kerala linked to community spread

20 dead in Karnataka; Telangana, A.P. report seven fatalities each; senior citizen succumbs in Thiruvananthapuram

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Karnataka on Tuesday reported 20 deaths and 947 new COVID-19 cases. Seven patients each succumbed to the disease in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

In what was seen as more evidence of local transmission of COVID-19 in Kerala, 19 more people got the disease from the community as of Tuesday. Nine were CISF personnel in Kannur.

COVID-19

Kerala reported 131 new cases, including one death. All except 19 were imported cases. With 75 new recoveries, active cases were 2,112.

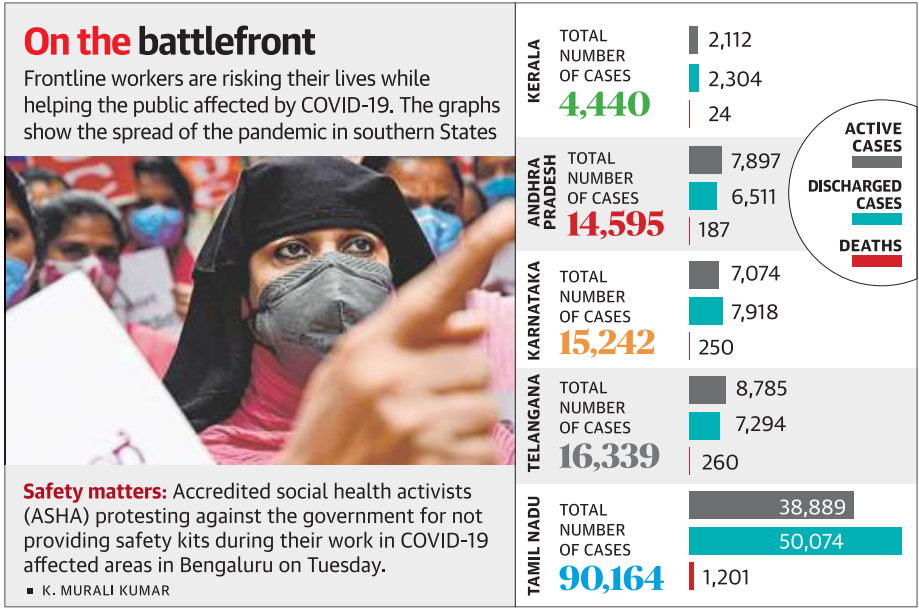
With the test results of a 76-year-old man, who had travelled from Mumbai and passed away at Thiruvananthapuram Medical College hospital on Saturday return-

ing COVID-19 positive, the number of COVID deaths rose to 24. Northern Kerala, especially the Malappuram-Palakkad belt and the Kanur-Kasargod belt could pose a challenge as case cluster formation had begun to happen here, even through in a small way, data showed.

Just in the past five days, the number of people who developed COVID-19 through local transmission in Kerala, as per official figures, was 76. Over the past five days, 42 people who travelled to Tamil Nadu by flights and trains tested positive there.

Andhra Pradesh crossed the 14,000-mark in the COVID-19 case tally with the detection of 704 more cases from 18,114 samples.

Seven persons succumbed to COVID-19, taking the toll to 187 and the tally rose to 14,595. Of the total, there were 7,897 active cases and 6,511 recoveries. Three



deaths were reported in Kur-nool and two in Krishna. One death each occurred in Gun-tur and Anantapur districts, the Health Department said.

Karnataka reported 20

deaths and 947 cases. Tuesday's deaths were the highest for a single day. The death toll touched 246.

Total cases came to 15,242, of which 12,021 were

reported in June.

Telangana experienced a spike on Tuesday again, with 945 more testing positive. Cases totalled 16,339 and total fatalities stood at 260.

Telangana puts off all entrance tests

A-G conveys govt. decision to HC

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD

All Common Entrance Tests (CETs) in Telangana for admissions to different courses, including the POLYCET 2020, were postponed by the government.

The High Court, hearing a petition for deferment of the tests, was informed by Advocate-General B.S. Prasad that the next dates would be announced in due course.

NSUI State president B. Venkat Narsing Rao had filed the petition. After hearing counsel for the petitioner, a Bench of Chief Justice Raghvendra Singh Chauhan

and Justice B. Vijaysen Reddy sought to know from Mr. Prasad whether the government would reimpose a lockdown in Hyderabad. The AG sought time till noon to ascertain the government stand. When the Bench re-assembled, he said the Cabinet was likely to take a call in a couple of days. To the Chief Justice's question on the petitioner's contention on deferment, he sought time till 2.30 p.m., saying the Chief Secretary was consulting the Departments concerned.

When the Bench re-assembled, he announced the decision to postpone all tests.

Down the drain



Canal breach: The canal linking Mallannasagar and Kondapochammasagar reservoir breached in Siddipet district of Telangana, inundating Shivaru Venkatapur village in the early hours of Tuesday. The canal was constructed over a year ago. ■ MOHD ARIF

Gas leak in Vizag pharma plant kills two

4 more fall sick at Sainor Life Sciences plant; 1 among them is battling for life

SUMIT BHATTACHARJEE
VISAKHAPATNAM

Two persons died and four others were taken ill after inhaling hydrogen sulphide vapours that leaked from the reactor of a pharmaceutical company's plant at Jawaharlal Nehru Pharma City at Parawada, about 40 km from here, late on Monday.

Commissioner of Police R.K. Meena told *The Hindu* that the leak at Sainor Life Sciences Private Limited had been brought under control.

The deceased have been identified as shift in-charge Ragi Narendra and chemist Gowri Shankar. The others –

L.V. Chandra Sekhar, P. Anand Babu, D. Janakiram and M. Surya Narayana – were rushed to a private hospital where the condition of Chandra Sekhar was said to be critical.

The incident comes close on the heels of the styrene monomer vapour leak at LG Polymers on May 7, in which 12 persons died and hundreds were hospitalised.

Mr. Meena, Vizag District Collector V. Vinay Chand and officials from the Fire Service and the Factories Departments rushed to the plant on Tuesday morning to assess the situation.

Based on a complaint



Tragedy strikes: Family members of one of the deceased mourning in Visakhapatnam on Tuesday. ■ K.R. DEEPAK

lodged by the VRO, police booked cases under IPC Sections 304 (2), 278, 284, 285 and 337. Police were deployed in strength and access to the plant was restricted.

Deputy Chief Inspector of

Factories K.B.S. Prasad said from preliminary investigation it appeared that the leak originated in a hose that connects the reactor to the centrifuge. The vapour leaked in a small quantity and accumulated near the reactor area

Ballari DC orders inquiry into 'dumping' of bodies

Video shows bodies being thrown into large trenches

STAFF REPORTER
BALLARI

Ballari Deputy Commissioner S.S. Nakul on Tuesday ordered an inquiry after a video showing bodies, allegedly those of COVID-19 victims, being hurled into large burial trenches in an isolated area.

The video caused public outrage in Ballari, which has seen a spurt in the number of cases that has now touched 834.

Mr. Nakul told *The Hindu* that an enquiry would be conducted by the Additional Deputy Commissioner and he had been directed to submit his report at the earliest.

“Whether the mortuary staff violated guidelines issued for burying COVID-19 victims will be confirmed only after the inquiry.”



A video grab purportedly showing a body being taken to a burial trench. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

He said there was no conclusive evidence to prove that the incident took place in Ballari district. “However, throwing bodies into a trench is disgraceful. The victims should be buried separately in an isolated area.”

Mr. Nakul said serious ac-

tion would be taken against those responsible, if it is confirmed that the incident took place in Ballari district. The district reported nine COVID-19 related deaths on Monday and five more on Tuesday, he said. Six deaths were reported on Wednesday.

Greater Hyderabad area contributed 869 positives.

T.N. cases cross 90,000

Tamil Nadu's overall COVID-19 case numbers crossed 90,000 on Tuesday, with another 3,943 persons testing positive for the infection. The State also crossed the 50,000-mark on persons discharged, registering a recovery rate of 55.5%. T.N. reported over 3,000-plus cases per day since June 25. The overall COVID-19 case count stood at 90,164. Chennai, for the second consecutive day, saw 2,000-plus positive cases. On Tuesday, a total of 2,325 persons were discharged from hospitals. The State had 38,889 active cases. The toll increased to 1,201, with 60 more persons succumbing to the infection from June 25 to 30.

(With inputs from Vijayawada, Hyderabad, Bengaluru and Chennai bureaus)

IN BRIEF



Congress extends olive branch to Jose K. Mani

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

At least two top leaders of the Congress, including the Opposition leader Ramesh Chennithala, have held out an olive branch to embattled Kerala Congress (M) factional leader Jose K. Mani, who faced the prospect of ouster, from the United Democratic Front (UDF). Former Chief Minister Oommen Chandy said the UDF had not closed the door on Mr. Mani. “It is not a closed chapter,” he said.

Goats, sheep quarantined in Karnataka village

BENGALURU

About 50 goats and sheep have been kept in isolation at a village in Tumakuru district after a shepherd tested positive for COVID-19, officials said on Tuesday. The villagers panicked when they noticed that some goats and sheep at Godekere village in Gollarahatti taluk were having respiratory problems, an officer in the animal husbandry department of the district said. PTI

Bangalore varsity students told to vacate hostels

BENGALURU

Hundreds of students of Bangalore University have been told to vacate their hostel rooms immediately as the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) wants to take over two hostels in the varsity's Jnanabharathi campus so that they can be converted into Covid Care Centres. Vice Chancellor K.R. Venugopal said that the State government had requested them to vacate two of the hostels, where 750 beds could be set up.

98.82% pass in Class X board exam in Kerala

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The results of the class X board exam held in Kerala amid the coronavirus scare were announced on Tuesday. Over four lakh students took the exam by wearing masks and following social distancing norms amid the virus spread. The pass percentage was 98.82. Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan congratulated all those who had passed and urged students to take the results in the right spirit. PTI

Slight rise in India's fish production

KOCHI

India's marine fish production registered a marginal increase of 2.1% in 2019 compared to the previous year. The country recorded 3.56 million tonnes in total landings during the year, according to the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute. The figures released here on Tuesday showed that Tamil Nadu took the first position in landings with 7.75 lakh tonnes. It was followed by Gujarat (7.49 lakh tonnes) and Kerala (5.44 lakh tonnes).

‘Seriously concerned’ by ban on apps: China

State-run media warn of fall in exports and investments

ANANTH KRISHNAN
CHENNAI

China on Tuesday said it was “seriously concerned” by India’s move to block 59 Chinese apps, which it described as “a deliberate interference in practical cooperation” between the two countries.

China’s state media warned the move would bring economic repercussions, including affecting outbound Chinese investment into India.

In separate statements issued by China’s Foreign Ministry in Beijing and its Embassy in New Delhi, the Chinese government called on India to review the decision.

“I want to stress that the Chinese government consistently asks Chinese enterprises to abide by international rules and local laws and regulations when conducting external cooperation,” China’s Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian said, expressing “strong concern”.

“The Indian government has the responsibility to protect the legitimate rights and interests of international in-



Zhao Lijian

vestors in India, including Chinese businesses, in accordance with market principles,” Mr. Zhao said.

“Practical cooperation between China and India is mutually beneficial. Deliberate interference in such cooperation will not serve the interests of the Indian side,” he added.

In a separate statement, the Chinese Embassy in Delhi said it was “seriously concerned with and firmly opposed to such action”.

“India’s measure selectively and discriminately aims at certain Chinese apps on ambiguous and far-fetched grounds, runs against fair and transparent procedure requirements,

abuses national security exceptions, and suspects of violating the WTO rules. It also goes against the general trend of international trade and e-commerce, and is not conducive to consumer interests and the market competition in India,” the statement said

The Embassy said the ban “will affect not only the employment of local Indian workers who support these apps, but also the interests of Indian users...”

Chinese media and social media widely discussed the ban on Tuesday. China restricts a number of foreign apps and websites in the mainland, and among those blocked are WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

In an editorial, the Communist Party-run *Global Times* slammed what it said was “a lacklustre explanation for the nonsensical move”.

The newspaper quoted experts who “predicted Chinese overseas direct investment (ODI) into India will drop sharply in 2020, with two experts forecasting a more than 50% [reduction].”

INTERVIEW | S. DINNY

‘Status quo at Pangong Tso has been changed’

PLA’s actions of blatantly erecting structures show they do not respect agreements, says retired Colonel

ANANTH KRISHNAN

While attention has been focused on the Galwan Valley following the June 15 violence, another unprecedented face-off has been unfolding at Pangong Tso. By erecting tents and other structures on Indian territory between Finger 4 and Finger 8, China’s PLA has changed rules of agreements, says Colonel S. Dinny (retd.), who commanded an infantry battalion at Pangong Tso until 2017.

Having served at Pangong Lake, how different is the current situation?

■ The problem peculiar to this place is China’s perception of the LAC is at Finger 4 and our perception is at Finger 8. The Fingers [mountain spurs] are numbered 1 to 8, from west to east. So, there is a distance of 8 km where the entire conflict has been happening. Our post is between Finger 2 and 3, which is well connected by a road. There is a track to 1 km short of Finger 4, but it ends there. After that, it’s only a foot track.

The Chinese are at Sirijap, which is 8 km east of Finger 8. They built a road up to Finger 4 in 1999 when Indian

troop presence was limited because of Kargil. No vehicle can cross Finger 4. When we patrol up to Finger 8, we have to go on foot. The Chinese have the advantage as they can come up to Finger 4 on vehicles.

They have been sensitive to our presence in this area because they felt they built the road, and they dominated up to Finger 4. They do not want us to come to Finger 8 frequently, so some times they stop us. As per agreements, when stopped, you cannot bypass them. We reciprocate, and stop them before they come to Finger 4. For many years, it was a one-man show and they were dominating. Only in the past seven or eight years, we have started pushing our infrastructure so our presence has increased. What [encounters] used to happen once or twice a month, is now on an almost daily basis.

What explains the timing?

■ Two things happen every summer. All the infrastructure work starts, and you have more troops in the area because annual exercises happen then. The winter at 17,000 feet is cruel. Summer



Both armies can definitely follow a no-patrolling zone in the around 23 areas along the LAC

is when you can both construct infrastructure and protest it, so you see escalation of conflicts.

What is different this time?

■ Firstly, the scale at which the status quo has been changed is blatant. In Pangong Tso, both sides know there is a dispute, but they have unilaterally changed the status quo and in a blatant way, by erecting structures [between Finger 4 and 8] for everyone to see, in a way that shows they do not respect past agreements. No country can allow such a thing to happen even if this territory is disputed. Also different is the scale of violence.

France condoles soldiers’ deaths

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

French Defence Minister Florence Parly wrote to her Indian counterpart Rajnath Singh condoling the death of 20 Indian soldiers in Galwan Valley, French diplomatic sources said on Tuesday.

“This was a hard blow against the soldiers, their families and the nation. In these difficult circumstances, I wish to express my steadfast and friendly support, along with that of the French armed forces. I request you to kindly convey my heartfelt condolences to the entire Indian armed forces as well as to the grieving families,” the sources quoted Ms. Parly as having said in the letter on Monday. Recalling that India is France’s strategic partner in the region, Ms. Parly reiterated deep solidarity and expressed her readiness to meet Mr. Singh to follow up on their ongoing discussions.

When will you throw out Chinese troops, Rahul asks PM

BJP talks of ‘Make in India’ but buys from China, he says

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

A day after the Union government banned 59 Chinese apps, former Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday alleged that China had taken away India’s ‘sacred land’ and asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi to tell the nation when he would push them out.

In a video message on Twitter, Mr. Gandhi said, “The whole country knows that China has taken away the sacred land of India. All of us know that the Chinese are inside Ladakh at four places. Narendra Modi ji, please tell the nation when will you push the Chinese



Rahul Gandhi

troops out of India and how?”

In a separate tweet, he took a dig at the government’s record with regard to imports from China. “Facts don’t lie. BJP says: Make in India. BJP does: Buy from China,” he tweeted and posted a graph that compared volume of imports from Chi-

na during the BJP-led NDA government and the Congress-led UPA regime.

The graph showed that India’s imports from China as a total percentage of its GDP grew from a little over 12% in 2009 (under UPA) to over 18% in 2018 (under NDA). It, however, shows a steady decline in India’s purchases from China between 2018 and 2020,

At the party’s official briefing, Congress spokesperson Supriya Srinate termed the ban on Chinese apps a mere ‘symbolic’ gesture and asserted that the party would back the government in taking a more ‘decisive action’.

IN BRIEF



Mamata calls for a befitting reply to China

KOLKATA

Pledging full support to the Union government on the tensions with China, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday said banning apps is not enough and the Centre should give a befitting reply to the neighbour. “Only banning some apps will not give you the result. We want to give China a befitting reply. How do we do it, that they have to decide,” she said. Ms. Banerjee said unless there is an ‘aggressive’ response from the Centre, people of the country will wonder, “What is the government’s stand?”

ED quizzes Ahmed Patel again in Sterling case

NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Tuesday recorded a statement of Congress leader Ahmed Patel in the Sterling Biotech Limited case. On June 27, it had questioned him for several hours. The probe is based on one of the two FIRs lodged by the CBI against Sterling Biotech and others in October 2017. While one case alleges routing of undeclared funds belonging to unknown Income Tax Department officials, the second alleges bank loan defaults to the tune of ₹8,100 crore. The ED has attached assets worth over ₹14,500 crore in the bank loan case.

Infiltration bid foiled in Kupwara, says Army

SRINAGAR

The Army on Tuesday said it foiled an infiltration by at least 6 to 8 armed men from across the Line of Control (LoC) in north Kashmir’s Kupwara district on the intervening night of Monday-Tuesday. “The intruders group was challenged at Parkian Gali along the LoC but it fled away taking advantage of darkness”, the Army added. Their suspicious movement was spotted on June 29-30 in two groups and “our own troops challenged the infiltrators with fire,” it said.

Criminal law reform consultation soon

NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has constituted a national level committee for reform in criminal law. The committee, which has several leading legal academicians on board, would be gathering opinions online, consulting with experts and collating material for their report to the government. The consultation exercise would start on July 4 and go on for the next three months.

Modi’s address did not match the hype: Congress

Implement a NYAY-like scheme, says Rahul Gandhi

The Prime Minister seemed preoccupied with the idea of Bihar Assembly elections

SUPRIYA SHRINATE
Congress Spokesperson

hype that was generated before the speech and the Prime Minister seemed “pre-occupied with the idea of Bihar Assembly elections.” The party also questioned Mr. Modi’s claim that the COVID-19 battle was well under control, as the data portrayed a grim picture and India was now the fourth highest in terms of the number of cases.

‘No shortage of funds’
Mr. Gandhi said COVID-19 had “destroyed” the economy, and the poor, the workers and the middle and salaried class had been hit the

hardest. He said the Centre had turned down the repeated requests to implement a scheme like NYAY citing shortage of funds. “I want to remind the nation that the government has waived crores of rupees in tax of 15 crore capitalists and in the last three months the prices of petrol and diesel have been increased by Narendra Modi government 22 times. There is no shortage of money, the government has ₹3 lakh crore,” he said.

“Two things were clear from the Prime Minister’s address. One, that this crisis is going to last, at least until November, as he extended the existing schemes. And second, his preoccupation with regard to the Bihar elections, as he was repeatedly referring to Bihar,” said party spokesperson Supriya Shrinate at a press conference.

Paswan welcomes PMGKAY extension

Oppn., activists call for universal PDS

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Union Minister for Food and Public Distribution Ram Vilas Paswan welcomed Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s announcement to extend the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) till November.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, Mr. Paswan said, “This is a historic step and I would congratulate PM Modi for this. I would urge the State governments, who have not so far distributed the entire allocated amount of food grains, should immediately pick up necessary food grains from the nearest FCI godowns and distribute it to the needy.”

So far, 87% of food grains allocated under the scheme for April, May and June has reached the beneficiaries, the Ministry said. Only Chhattisgarh and Lakshadweep have achieved 100% distribution.

Opposition parties and activists working in the field of food rights however, are not impressed. “Bowing to people’s protests, the Modi government has extended the provision of 5 kg grains free for 80 crore people for



Ram Vilas Paswan

the next 5 months. This falls far short of the required 10 kg per month for six months to all needy to prevent hunger deaths,” CPI (M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury tweeted. CPI general secretary D. Raja questioned what was stopping the government on universalising public distribution at a time of crisis, especially when government godowns have stocks far exceeding the buffer stock range.

Associate Professor of Economics and food rights activist Reetika Khera said while extending the food entitlements is a welcome move, Mr. Modi didn’t speak about the Atmanirbhar Bharat scheme under which eight crore migrants, who are not covered under the National Food Security Act, were provided food grains for two months.

TAMILNADU NEWSPRINT AND PAPERS LIMITED		
Kagithapuram – 639 136, Karur Dist. Tamil Nadu Ph : 04324-277001 (10 Lines) Mail : purchase.wood@tnpl.co.in		
NOTICE INVITING TENDER		
Tender No.	Scope of work	Due Date
202113 001181	Unloading, Stacking and Feeding of Eucalyptus and other species of wood and wood chips feeding at TNPL Unit-I at Kagithapuram for the year 2020-21	10.07.2020
202113 001339	Providing Manpower Asst. for Maintenance of Lawns & Greenery at TNPL Unit-I Kagithapuram for the year 2020-21	15.07.2020
Detailed Scope of work, terms & condition, Tender Fee, EMD etc. are available in tender document at our websites: www.tnpl.com / www.tenders.tn.gov.in DIPR/2428/Tender/2020		
TNPL - Maker of bagasse based eco-friendly Paper		

TAMIL NADU AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY		
COIMBATORE - 641 003		
RATE CONTRACT NOTIFICATION – 2020-21		
On behalf of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, sealed tenders are invited for the supply of Chemicals, Glassware, Laboratory apparatus, Scientific Equipments, Fragile and Non-Fragile items etc., for the constituent Colleges and Research Stations of the University during the financial year 2020-2021. The firms should have three years experience as on 01.01.2020 as ‘MANUFACTURER’ of the said items, they intend to supply and hold a valid ‘Manufacturer’s License’ for such of those items which are marketed under their own approved or patented brand names or trade marks. The term ‘Manufacturer’ also include manufacturers or their sole agents or their dealer whom they authorize to participate in the tender. The manufacturer should authorize only one dealer/distributor for participating in the tender. The tender documents can be obtained from the office of the Comptroller, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore – 641003 on payment of Cost of Rs.1680/- (Rs.1500 + GST 12%) through a demand draft drawn in favour of the COMPTROLLER, TAMIL NADU AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY, COIMBATORE payable at State Bank of India, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University Branch, Coimbatore 3, subsequent to the date of publication of this notification. The last date for the issue of tender documents is 17.7.2020 upto 11.00 am. The last date for receipt of filled tenders is upto 1.00 pm. on 17.7.2020. If the tender opening date happens to be a holiday, the tenders will be opened on next working day. DIPR/2438/Tender/2020		
COMPTROLLER		

TAMILNADU NEWSPRINT AND PAPERS LIMITED		
No.67, Mount Road, Guindy, Chennai - 600 032. Ph: 044-22301094-97, 22354415-16 / 18, 22354430, FAX: 044-22350834 E.Mail: purchase.corp@tnpl.co.in		
NOTICE INVITING TENDER		
Tender No.	Material Description	Due Date
202113 001415	Clearing & Transportation of MEP - Imported cargo received in FCL / Break bulk from Chennai Port to TNPL Unit-II factory at Mondipatti (Trichy District)	10.07.2020
Interested Customs House Agents cum Transport Contractors having adequate experience / vehicles may either download the Tender document from our websites: www.tnpl.com / www.tenders.tn.gov.in OR obtain from Sr.Manager (Purchase) at the above said address on payment of non-refundable tender fee of Rs.590/- by DD drawn in favour of TAMIL NADU NEWSPRINT AND PAPERS LIMITED payable at Chennai. TNPL will follow Two Bid System for the above tender. DIPR/2429/Tender/2020		
TNPL - Maker of bagasse based eco-friendly Paper		



NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY DELHI
(A University of Law Established by Act No. 1 of 2008 of NCT of Delhi)
Sector-14, Dwarka, New Delhi-110078

ADMISSION ANNOUNCEMENT 2020-21
(REVISED)

LAST DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS : July 7, 2020

DATE FOR ALL INDIA LAW ENTRANCE TEST (AILET) : August 18, 2020 (11:00 AM to 12:30 PM)

This is in supersession to the Admission Notice issued by the National Law University Delhi dated 14th January, 2020 for admission to the B.A.L.L.B.(Hons.), LL.M. and Ph.D. Programmes for the academic year 2020-21 with 50% reservation for students from Delhi. 22% reservation for OBC & 10% for EWS. The decision of University for providing reservation for students from Delhi was challenged in the Hon’ble High Court of Delhi through W. P. (C) 3454/2020 Balvinder Singh Sangwan & Ors Versus State (GNCT) of Delhi Through Chief Secretary & Ors. The Hon’ble High Court of Delhi on 29th June 2020 has ordered that the “status quo ante as of previous academic year shall be maintained for making admissions to the B.A.L.L.B.(Five Year Programme), LL.M.(One Year Programme) in NLU Delhi for the academic year 2020-21”. In view of orders passed by Hon’ble Delhi High Court, the seats matrix is accordingly rolled back in consonance with the academic year 2019-20 as under:

B.A.L.L.B. (Hons.)-Five-Year Programme
Eligibility: Senior Secondary School Examination (10+2 System) or Equivalent Examination with 50% marks. The candidates appearing in the 12th standard in main annual Examination can also apply.
Total Seats: 80 [70 Seats on merit through All India Law Entrance Test (AILET) and 10 Seats for direct admission to Foreign Nationals on merit (5 seats for Foreign Nationals & 5 seats for OCI/PIO)]. Foreign Nationals are exempted from AILET. Foreign Nationals to be eligible should have obtained 65% marks in the qualifying examination.
Reservation: 15% for SC candidates, 7.5% for ST candidates and 5% for Persons with Disabilities.
Note: One additional supernumerary seat for Kashmiri Migrants. Two additional supernumerary seats for Residents of Jammu & Kashmir.
LL.M.-One-Year Programme
Eligibility: LL.B. or an Equivalent Law Degree with 55% marks (50% in case of SC/ST/ Persons with Disabilities). The candidates appearing in final year LL.B. main Examination can also apply.
Total Seats: 80 [70 Seats on merit through All India Law Entrance Test (AILET) and 10 Seats for direct admission to Foreign Nationals on merit (5 seats for Foreign Nationals & 5 seats for OCI/PIO)]. Foreign Nationals are exempted from AILET.
Reservation: 15% for SC candidates, 7.5% for ST candidates, 5% for Persons with Disabilities.
Note: One additional supernumerary seat for Kashmiri Migrants.
Ph.D.-Programme
Eligibility: LL.M. Degree with 55% Marks or its Equivalent (50% in case of SC/ST/ Persons with Disabilities). For detailed eligibility conditions visit University website www.nlu.edu.ac.in.
Total Seats: 8+2 [8 Seats on merit through All India Law Entrance Test (AILET) and 2 Seats for direct admission to Foreign Nationals on merit of evaluation of Research Proposals. Foreign Nationals are exempted from AILET (Total number of seats may vary).

Admission to B.A.L.L.B. (Hons.), LL.M. and Ph.D. Programmes will be through AILET to be conducted through remote proctored test (RPT) Mode. The University has also provided the option for withdrawal of applications to the existing applicants in view of change in seat matrix and mode of conduct of AILET-2020. For detailed instructions/information and copy of orders of Hon’ble High Court of Delhi, please visit University website: <http://www.nlu.edu.ac.in>

Further as per directions of the Hon’ble High Court of Delhi, the last date for submission of online application forms is also extended upto July 7, 2020. Interested candidates should apply only online on payment of Rs.3,050/- (Rupees Three Thousand Fifty Only) for General Category Candidates, Rs.1,050/- (Rupees One thousand Fifty only) in case of SC/ST and Persons with Disabilities (PD) along with copy of requisite Caste/Persons with Disabilities Certificate through: <http://nlu.edu.ac.in>, <http://www.nlu.edu.ac.in> up to July 7, 2020. Below Poverty Line (BPL) applicants of SC/ST Category are exempted from application fee. The admit cards will be available online w.e.f. July 27, 2020 on the above websites.

Note: The National Law University Delhi has not authorized any agent/agency for admission. No payment should be made to any unauthorized person. Any complaint of this kind should be intimated to the University on info@nlu.edu.ac.in

Prof. (Dr.) G.S. BAJPAI
REGISTRAR



A ND-NDE

‘Wrong to blame China for India-Nepal dispute’

They should resolve differences through talks, says envoy

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Nepal's new political map was a response to a public demand to uphold its sovereignty, according to Chinese Ambassador in Kathmandu Hou Yanqi.

In an interview to a prominent Nepalese online publication, she said Nepal's territorial dispute with India at Kalapani should not be disturbed by "unilateral" action and those who said Nepal acted on behalf of China in fact intended to undermine China-Nepal ties.

"This is a measure by the Nepali government to firmly safeguard sovereignty and territorial integrity and comply with the public opinion. Any so-called "Nepal at the behest of China" accusation is baseless and comes with ulterior motives. Such accusations are not only an insult to the will of the independent country of Nepal,



Chinese Ambassador in Kathmandu Hou Yanqi

but also are endeavours directed at disruption of China-Nepal relations", said Ms. Hou in the interview to *Rising Nepal*.

She argued that reports about China acquiring territory from Nepal in the northern part of the country were created by "irresponsible media and individual groups" as the Nepal-China boundary was already demarcated "without any dispute".

The envoy urged Nepal

and India to resolve the territorial dispute at Kalapani. "We hope the two countries will resolve their differences properly through friendly consultations and refrain from taking any unilateral action that may complicate the situation", she said.

New map

Nepal passed the new map in the Lower House of Parliament on June 13 and the Second Constitution Amendment, which gave constitutional guarantee to the map, completed the legislative process on June 18 with the authentication of the Bill by President Bidhya Devi Bhandari.

Indian Army chief General Manoj Naravane had said Nepal was working at the behest of a third country, hinting at Chinese support to Nepal's territorial assertion in the Limpiyadhura-Kalapani-Lipulekh region.

LIC employees write to PM against disinvestment

‘It is inimical to Atmanirbhar Bharat’

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The All-India LIC Employees Federation has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi asking him to stop the proposed disinvestment in the Life Insurance Corporation of India, saying the move would be against his stated mission of an Atmanirbhar Bharat.

In a letter on June 25, the federation's president and Rajya Sabha MP, Binoy Viswam, said the employees were concerned about news reports on the Centre's decision to invite bids from consulting firms, investment bankers and financial institutions to advise the government on the proposed IPO process.

"We wish to draw your attention and at the same time seek your intervention to immediately stop the disinvestment in LIC, one of the jewels in the crown of India, as it is against your much emphasised mission and

rightly so of Atmanirbhar Bharat. Disinvestment in LIC will be a stepping stone for privatisation in future which will be against the national interest," the letter stated.

LIC provided a large number of Indians in rural areas and socially and economically weaker sections life insurance at a reasonable cost, it said.

"National priorities and obligation of reasonable returns to the policyholders have been the main criteria of LIC's investment. The total funds so invested for the benefits of the community at large are ₹29,84,331 crore as on March 31, 2019. If the government goes ahead with its plan of disinvestment in LIC, there will be implication for policyholders," the letter said.

With disinvestment, LIC would be forced to review its investments in social sectors like housing, power and irrigation, it said.

M.P. lawyer ‘thrashed’ by police booked

STAFF REPORTER
BHOPAL

Nearly three months after a lawyer was reportedly beaten up by the police while he on his way to hospital in Betul, Madhya Pradesh, a case has been registered against him for allegedly violating prohibitory orders and manhandling the personnel.

On March 23, when the policemen on lockdown duty spotted lawyer Deepak Bundele not wearing a face mask "without a valid reason," they inquired with him. But he reportedly opposed the inquiry, "abused personnel and manhandled them after getting agitated," the FIR said.

Further, the FIR said Mr. Bundele reportedly threatened the personnel by saying he was a "senior advocate" at the (Madhya Pradesh) High Court. The case was registered on June 18 under IPC Sections 353 (assault or criminal force to deter public servant from discharge of his duty), 188 (disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant) and 294 (obscene acts and songs).

The FIR relies upon the police log book and statements of witnesses, including three members of the Rashtriya Hindu Sena, a right-wing group, who claim Mr. Bundele "fell on the ground on his own and started flapping his limbs on the ground and hitting himself with his hands".

HC suspends 2 FIRs against Arnab

Sword of Damocles cannot hang over the head of journalist, the court says

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Journalist Arnab Goswami was on Tuesday granted interim relief from arrest by the Bombay High Court.

The court suspended FIRs against him for alleged communal coverage of the Palghar lynching case and an incident of migrants gathering outside the Bandra station.

The court said, "We cannot have the spectacle of a Damocles' sword hanging over the head of a journalist while conducting a public debate."

A Division Bench of Ujjal Bhuyan and Riyaz Chagla said, "India is now a mature democracy. Seventy years into our republic we cannot be seen to be skating on thin ice so much so that mere



Arnab Goswami

mention of a place of worship will lead to animosity or hatred amongst religious communities causing upheaval and conflagration on the streets. Subscribing to such a view would stifle all legitimate discussions and debates in the public domain."

In the Palghar case, the court said: "If the transcript, together with the first information, are read as a whole,

INTERVIEW | SHAKTISINH GOHIL

‘We have learnt from our mistakes in 2019’

Face of the *Mahagathbandhan* will be decided by consensus, says Congress's Bihar in-charge

SOBHANA K. NAIR

Congress Bihar in-charge Shaktisinh Gohil said the Mahagathbandhan, or the grand alliance of Opposition parties, in Bihar has learnt its lessons from the disarray during the general election, and like-minded parties are working on providing an alternative to the voter.

The *Mahagathbandhan* failed to make any mark in the Lok Sabha election. What went wrong then? And has the Congress and its allies learnt any lessons from the debacle?

■ We made a few mistakes in the run up to the Lok Sabha election.

Till the very last minute we didn't have clarity on seat-sharing and the tussle over who will contest on which seat didn't go down well.

Although we did get over the differences, at least among the top layers of the

leadership, by then it was too late to bring a similar cohesion among the cadres on the ground.

We have all learnt our lessons from this. All the alliance partners have to ensure that we do not get entangled in the number game and each ally is treated with respect.

There are already cracks visible in the alliance, with Hindustan Awam Morcha (Secular) leader Jitan Ram Manjhi protesting against the RJD for not constituting a coordination committee. Does the Congress share his views on the subject?

■ We had a preliminary meeting which was attended by all our alliance partners. It was held in a cordial atmosphere.

It was decided that the RJD will organise a meeting of the State-level leaders and constitute a coordination committee.

I don't see a problem, I be-



The BJP and the JD(U) are not on the same ideological plane and even their style of governance is opposite to each other's

lieve it will soon be taken care of.

We have been hearing about a possibility of a third front, with the Congress walking out of the *Mahagathbandhan* along with the other parties. Would you comment?

■ The Bihar voter is very unhappy. The BJP and the JD(U) are not on the same ideolog-

46 million girls went missing in India

One in nine females below the age of 5 die due to postnatal sex selection: report

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

One in three girls missing globally due to sex selection, both pre- and post-natal, is from India – 46 million out of the total 142 million, according to the UNFPA's State of the World Population 2020 report released on Tuesday.

The figure shows that the number of missing women has more than doubled over the past 50 years, who were at 61 million in 1970.

The report examines the issue of missing women by studying sex ratio imbalances at birth as a result of gender-biased sex selection as well as excess female mortality due to deliberate neglect of girls because of a culture of son preference. Excess female mortality is the difference between observed and expected mortality of the girl child or avoidable death of girls during childhood.

The report cites a 2014 study to state that India has the highest rate of excess fe-

Missing girls

An estimated one in nine deaths of girls below the age of 5 in India, the highest among all countries, may be attributed to postnatal sex selection. The table shows estimates of excess female mortality (EFM) below age 5 and its share of overall mortality rates in 2012

Excess female mortality rates are calculated as the difference between observed and expected mortality rates for girls below age 5

Country	EFM below 5 years	EFM as a % of overall female under-5 mortality
India	13.5	11.7%
Bahrain	1.1	5.9%
Egypt	2.4	5.6%
Iran	1.8	5.2%
Jordan	1.9	5%
Nepal	2.9	3.5%
China	1	3.3%
Afghanistan	5.2	2.7%
Pakistan	4.7	2.7%
Bangladesh	2.1	2.6%

male deaths at 13.5 per 1,000 female births or one in nine deaths of females below the age of 5 due to postnatal sex selection. The same study shows that in Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan excess female mortality of girls below 5 years of age was under 3%.

However, the advent of technology and increased access to ultrasound imaging ensured that parents didn't have to wait for the birth of

their girl child to kill her but could terminate a foetus upon knowing its gender. This resulted in the number of girls missing due to female foeticide exceeding those that were missing because of postnatal sex selection.

According to estimates averaged over a five year period (2013-17), annually, there were 1.2 million missing female births, at a global level. India had about 4,60,000 girls 'missing' at

birth each year.

These skewed numbers translate into long-term shifts in the proportions of women and men in the population of some countries, the report points out.

In many countries, this results in a "marriage squeeze" as prospective grooms far outnumber prospective brides, which further results in human trafficking for marriage as well as child marriages.

ED attaches assets in terror funding case

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate has attached assets in connection with a terror funding case.

The attached properties include a portion of one residential flat in Delhi's Jangpura, belonging to Aijaz Hussain Khawaja, a resident of Baramulla in Jammu and Kashmir.

The balance in the bank account of his wife has also been attached.

In 2006, Khawaja was arrested with a bag containing 2.05 kg of RDX and ₹49 lakh in cash by the Special Cell of the Delhi police. He was convicted by the court under the Explosive Substances Act and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, and sentenced to seven years' imprisonment.

Hawala operator

The ED probe revealed that the accused was operating as a hawala operator for financing various terror-related activities in Jammu and Kashmir.

He was in touch with Muktiar Ahmed Bhatt alias Ahmed, a Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba operative, to carry out hawala transactions for various separatist and militant activities, the agency said.

"He had generated proceeds of crime to the tune of ₹8.50 lakh during that period," the agency alleged.

World Bank okays funds for Namami Gange

It's a five-year loan of ₹3,000 crore

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The World Bank has approved a five-year loan to the Namami Gange project worth ₹3,000 crore (\$400 million) to develop and improve infrastructure projects to abate pollution in the river basin.

The Namami Ganga or the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) has already received ₹4,535 crore (\$600 million) from the World Bank until December 2021 as part of the first phase of the National Ganga River Basin project. So far, 313 projects worth ₹25,000 crore have been sanctioned under the mission.

Some of the projects to be undertaken under the second phase of the mission include spillover projects from the first phase of the mission as well cleaning projects in tributaries such as the Yamuna and Kali.

In the second phase, the loan would fund ₹1,134 crore

democracy and everyone accordingly shares their thoughts.

There is reluctance among the other allies about projecting Tejashwi Yadav as the face of the alliance. Does the Congress accept him as the face of the alliance?

■ This is something for the allies to decide by consensus at an appropriate time. And when you unite on an ideology then the issue of projecting any one face is not relevant.

During the Lok Sabha election, the Congress tried hard to bring the Left parties into the alliance but the RJD resisted. Will that change?

■ I have said earlier, too, that all the like-minded parties should come together. And Left parties definitely fall under this category. We will be very happy if all of us can work out some space for the Left in the *Mahagathbandhan*.

(\$150 million) for three new 'Hybrid Annuity Projects' in Agra, Meerut and Saharanpur for the tributaries of the Ganga.

A sum of ₹1,209 crore (\$160 million) is provided for the ongoing DBOT (Design, Build, Operate and Transfer) projects in Buxar, Munger, Begusarai.

Other heads of distribution would include 'Institutional Development' (\$20 million or ₹151 crore); 'Improving Investments Resilience to COVID-19 Like Emergency Situations' (\$5 million or ₹38 crore); Performance Based Incentive for Urban Local Bodies (\$30 million or ₹226 crore) and Programme Communication and Management (\$16 million or ₹121 crore), said a release from the NMCG.

"The government's Namami Ganga Programme has revitalised India's efforts in rejuvenating the Ganga," said Junaaid Ahmad, World Bank's Country Director.

Geelani admitted failure: J&K DGP

‘Separatists made personal gains’

PEERZADA ASHIQ
SRINAGAR

Jammu and Kashmir Director-General of Police Dilbagh Singh on Tuesday termed the resignation of Hurriyat chairman Syed Ali Geelani "an admission that his mission has failed and the Kashmir issue was used by separatists for personal gains".

Inaugurating a women's police station at Rajouri, he said Mr. Geelani's letter to the Hurriyat constituents was an "eye-opener". "Geelani has admitted that they [the separatists] have miserably failed in their mission and the Kashmir issue was used by the people for their personal gains. He has confessed that his path was wrong, and they were propagating negative-thinking," Mr. Singh said.

Drug trade

The DGP said Mr. Geelani also highlighted "how drugs were being traded from across the Line of Control to this side".

Mr. Singh said 128 militants had been killed in Kashmir this year. "This is for the first time in the many years past that in the month of June 48 militants have been killed," he said. But he warned that militants were trying to use the Machil and Gurez routes to enter Jammu and Kashmir.

Mr. Geelani, who resigned from the Hurriyat on



Syed Ali Geelani

Monday, has accused the Pakistan chapter of "indiscipline".

"The Azad Kashmir branch of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference is just a representative forum. It is not authorised to take any individual or collective decision. Accessing assemblies and ministries through their own families and then actively participating in the government structure there, lining up against each other internally, quarrels, financial irregularities and countless such issues have been the subject of public debate. Recently, on the basis of investigations, some of those involved were fired. Investigations into the remaining gentlemen were also under way, but your representatives there, considering this process of investigation as an insult, started calling separate meetings after which orders were issued to dissolve the organizational structure there until further orders," his letter reads.



Verna gets a facelift



petrol mid-sizers equipped with auto transmissions.

The Verna Turbo is also reasonably quick in kickdown acceleration: 20-80kph takes 7.29sec, and 40-100kph takes 9.05sec, which translates to ample overtaking power. Yes, it gets a bit vocal when you rev it hard, and there is a hint of that three-cylinder thrum at higher speeds, but find an open road and the Verna Turbo can certainly put a smile on your face.

The steering has also improved and feels better weighted and direct. Another change is to the brakes. Hy-

2020 HYUNDAI VERNA TURBO-PETROL SPECIFICATIONS	
LENGTH:	4440mm
WIDTH:	1729mm
HEIGHT:	1475mm
WHEELBASE:	2600mm
TYRE SIZE:	195/55 R16
FUEL TANK CAPACITY:	45 litres
ENGINE:	998cc, 3 cyls, turbo-petrol
POWER:	120hp at 6000rpm
TORQUE:	172Nm at 1500-4000rpm
GEARBOX:	7-speed dual-clutch auto

SHAPUR KOTWAL

You have to give it to Hyundai for going the distance with the facelifted Verna. It sports fresh styling on the outside, more features inside and a trio of new engines. So what is it like?

To start with, the 2020 Verna looks thoroughly refreshed. Up front, Hyundai's grille is now a few sizes larger and sports a frameless look. The nose is sportier and even has a mini spoiler integrated into it; the fog lights have been pushed back into the chin, the coupé-like arching roofline on the boot is carried over from the earlier car and the new alloys look good. The car, however, has been raised a bit, so the stance is not as nice as earlier. Around the back, the new chrome-finished squared-off exhaust tips add a bit of bling.

On the inside, key changes include a larger, free-standing eight inch touchscreen, metallic brackets on the air-con vents and a BMW-style digital instrument panel. Hyundai has also provided two large digital readouts for speed and engine rpm.

The all-black cabin with red accents on this Verna Turbo lends a sporty feel, though the overabundance of black has its downsides. It makes the cabin look smaller than it is. This is not the case with the two-tone dash on the other versions of the car. Apart from these changes, the cabin remains unaltered at the front. The largish, cooled front seats are supportive and comfortable, and

With its improved driving manners and better brakes, the new Verna Turbo is quite pleasant to drive



embedded in the touchscreen is Hyundai's connected Blue Link app. You also get a voice command system, Apple CarPlay, Android Auto and onboard navigation as well.

The backseat is still the Verna's weak link. There is less legroom here than on some sub-four-metre sedans, and if you are over six feet tall, headroom could be an issue too. If the relative lack of legroom does not

bother you, then the rear seat is actually quite comfortable. The backrest is nicely reclined and offers good side and thigh support. You also get a manual rear blind, rear air-con vents and a USB charging point.

Other kit on this top-of-the-line Verna SX(O) includes a sunroof, wireless charging, six airbags, ESC, traction control, cruise control, front and rear parking sensors and a hands-free boot release.

Robust and relaxed drive

Moving to the engine, the 1.0-litre turbo-petrol unit is smooth and well-balanced that you will be hard-pressed to tell it is not an in-line four. The twin-clutch automatic gearbox coupled with the smooth engine makes

driving in traffic light and easy. However, off-boost, at low engine speeds, the unit does feel a bit flat-footed.

What gives the Verna a robust mid-range is the 172Nm of torque. Acceleration feels pretty strong and those who enjoy driving in a more spirited manner will also appreciate the wide powerband; the engine pulls hard all the way from around 2,000 to 6,000rpm. While the twin-clutch gearbox is not as quick as the ones from Volkswagen or Skoda, and their TSI engine pulls harder in the top end, the Verna is not too far off the mark.

The Verna clocked in at 13.09sec in a 0-100kph sprint; we did have to contend with a rev lock when stationary that prevented us from getting a quick initial launch. Expect it to be around a second or so faster in the real world on par with other turbo-



Looks matter For those looking for a fun and convenient daily drive, the Verna Turbo ticks a lot of boxes. **SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT**

Toyota Yaris

Toyota's Yaris is the only other mid-size sedan with an automatic that comes within a ₹10 lakh budget. The Yaris' engine is good enough for the city but feels out of depth on the highway; its CVT gearbox is nice if driven in an unhurried manner. Although the Yaris gets segment-leading safety kit, it is underwhelming in a lot of aspects.

Toyota Yaris CVT sub-₹10 lakh variants (ex-showroom, Delhi)
(JO) CVT: ₹9.56 lakh (petrol)

Maruti Suzuki Dzire

Maruti's compact sedan has recently been refreshed and now comes with a more powerful but also more frugal 1.2-litre K12N petrol engine. The new engine makes the Maruti Dzire the most efficient petrol car in India, when the engine is paired with the AMT gearbox. Compared to its rivals, the Dzire is on the pricey side, but it does come with ample cabin space and a good amount of kit.

Maruti Suzuki Dzire AMT sub-₹10 lakh variants (ex-showroom, Delhi)
VXi AGS: ₹7.31 lakh (petrol)
ZXi AGS: ₹8 lakh (petrol)
ZXi+ AGS: ₹8.80 lakh (petrol)

Tata Tigor

Tata rolled out a facelift for the Tigor at the start of 2020, bringing a fresh design and a BS-VI-compliant petrol engine. As before, the 1.2-litre petrol unit can be had with manual and AMT options. The AMT unit is good but not great. However, the Tigor AMT's value proposition makes the compact sedan very tempting.

Tata Tigor sub-₹10 lakh variants (ex-showroom, India)
XMA: ₹6.6 lakh (petrol)
XZA+: ₹7.49 lakh (petrol)

Honda Amaze

The Honda Amaze is unique in India by virtue of offering a CVT automatic option for both petrol and diesel versions. The CVT units work well with both engines, and keen drivers will like the paddleshifters offered on the petrol version. The convenience (and economy) of the CVTs aside, we'd recommend the Amaze for its roomy cabin.

Honda Amaze CVT sub-₹10 lakh variants (ex-showroom, Delhi)
S CVT: ₹7.72 lakh (petrol); ₹8.92 lakh (diesel)
V CVT: ₹8.35 lakh (petrol); ₹9.55 lakh (diesel)
VX CVT: ₹8.75 lakh (petrol); ₹9.96 lakh (diesel)

Hyundai Aura

Of the three engine options available on the Aura, namely a 1.0 turbo-petrol, 1.2 petrol and 1.2 diesel, the latter two can be had with AMT automatic gearboxes. Hyundai's AMT unit works well enough but does get caught out every now and then. Interestingly, in diesel-AMT form, the Hyundai Aura is the most fuel-efficient diesel car on sale in India. Sadly, you have to compromise on a few features as the automatics are not available in top-spec form.

Hyundai Aura AMT sub-₹10 lakh variants (ex-showroom, India)
S AMT: ₹7.06 lakh (petrol); ₹8.24 lakh (diesel)
SX+ AMT: ₹8.05 lakh (petrol); ₹9.23 lakh (diesel)

Maruti Suzuki Ciaz

The value pick among mid-size sedans, the Maruti Suzuki Ciaz is also one of only two models from the segment with an automatic version that's priced under ₹10 lakh. The Ciaz's 4-speed torque converter automatic might seem prehistoric but it's fine for city use. As it is, Suzuki's 1.5-litre petrol mild-hybrid powertrain is not one to get your pulse racing. The Ciaz does impress for its space and efficiency.

Maruti Suzuki Ciaz A/T sub-₹10 lakh variants (ex-showroom, Delhi)
Delta A/T: ₹9.98 lakh (petrol)

Spoilt for choice

We bring you the best automatic sedans available in India under ₹10 lakh



Q AND A WITH HORMAZD



A plush car

Parv Kapoor, Varanasi: I'm planning to buy a car within ₹40 lakh but am confused between the Kia Carnival and the Ford Endeavour.

■ Both are very different cars and the only thing they have in common is lots of space, which, we assume, is the reason you are deciding between these two. If you are mainly driving in the city, then the Carnival is a better bet. It's plusher, has more features and is more refined. Also, the seats in the Carnival, especially the 'captain seats', are very comfortable. The Endeavour is not as manoeuvrable as the Carnival, and not as easy to get in and out of. So, as an everyday car, this big SUV is not as practical as the Kia MPV. However, if you are driving on bad roads, travelling out of town, especially to remote areas, the hardy Endeavour is what we would pick.

In the reckoning

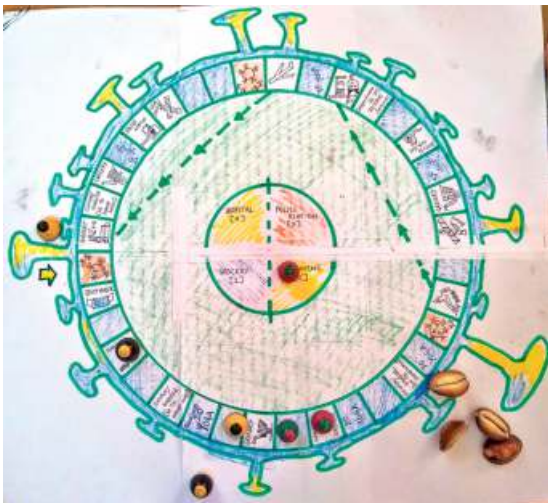
Abhed Sethi, New Delhi: We own a 2013 Mahindra XUV500 and are planning to replace it by the end of this year with the new-generation Skoda Octavia. However, since it's been delayed, I want to know if it is worth the wait or if the Skoda Superb is a better choice. We also like the Skoda Karoq. Our requirements are good-quality interiors, a decent equipment list, a comfortable cabin, and it should be nice to drive. Our drives are limited to weekends, with seldom weekday usage, and rare out-of-town trips. Also, we are not limiting ourselves to Skoda.

■ Yes, the next-gen Octavia is delayed till early 2021, but upgrading to the Superb is not a bad option. In fact, we would pick it over the Karoq. It is more spacious, has a stronger engine and belongs to a higher segment. The Karoq is also a high-quality car but the 1.5 engine isn't as strong, and cabin space is cramped, compared to the Superb.

Hormazd Sorabjee is the editor of Autocar India. Mail your feedback and queries to roadshow@thehindu.co.in

A game of chance

A 10-year-old in a Delhi school has developed a board game around COVID-19, which is now available online



SUNALINI MATHEW

Veer V Kashyap was on holiday in Bengaluru with his paternal grandparents, when the lockdown struck. Bored with looking for something to do, besides playing all the regular board games and a guitar, he tried to engage with his father, who, annoyed, asked him to figure out his own game.

The results of an idea that had come to him: a game that reflected the time of quarantine, hand sanitiser use, social distancing, mask wearing, and more. "On the TV, everyone was speaking about the Coronavirus," says the 10-year-old, who studies in Army Public School, Delhi.

His father, Commander Vinayaka, pleasantly surprised at his son's creation, helped Veer draw the game on cardboard, shaped in the way the magnified virus was often represented in the media. His five-year-old sister, Sindhu, helped fill in the colours.

Tested and tried (Left) The game, (below) Veer and his family playing the game

• SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

space that asks the player to perform a yoga pose, to boost immunity. "He had five or six rules, and we helped him develop them," says the father. As time passed and new regulations and guidelines came into play, they were added in. "COVID-19 warriors came later, so we put that into the game, where you have to clap your hands when you land on that square," says Veer.

Besides the board, dice, and coins, the rule book also has a list of symptoms, precautions, and COVID-19 warriors

The rudimentary game was tested at home with the whole family, including the grandparents, participating. They then reached out to Venkata Reddy, founder-CEO of Teck Team Solutions, a company that works in the robotics and embedded systems space, developing prototypes and products from children's ideas. Venkata had been a student of Veer's mother, Sangeetha HC in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, where she had taught the engineering course.

"Two months ago, she shared the YouTube video and brief on the game. I thought it was a nice idea, to educate children about COVID-19, and I suggested that we design and develop it," says Venkata, whose company now handles the marketing, manufacturing and distribution of the board game.

Besides the board, dice, and coins, the rule book also has a list of symptoms, precautions, and COVID-19 warriors (doctors, police, vegetable vendors and essential suppliers). "The idea is that many years from now, people will look back to know our reality today," says Commander Vinayaka, adding that as someone from the Indian Navy, the world of game development was new. The game has a copyright for the design and rules, with the name trademarked.

Venkata and his team have also developed the app, but are waiting for Government clearances on that.

Corona Yuga is available on Amazon.in; suitable for ages 5+; more information at Coronayuga.com

Chasing shadows

Chennai-based The Little Theatre's new alternative learning initiative, ArtsLab, explores the phenomenon of 'light' in its first module



Virtually active (Left) Amid a session, (below) puppets made by students during previous sessions

• SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

GOWRI S

Light reflects and refracts; it creates drama and gives birth to shadows. Textbook definitions may restrict light to a scientific phenomenon, but when viewed through an artistic lens, it gains new meaning. And, this is what Chennai-based children's theatre company, The Little Theatre focusses on, in its new alternative learning initiative, ArtsLab.

Devised as different modules, ArtsLab's first chapter, Exploring Light, aims to engage children with the scientific phenomenon through theatre, music, dance and art in a month-long course.

"The idea stems from my own personal experience at school. At some point, I fell off the education system's bandwagon because I couldn't relate to what I was being taught. Either I had to mug things up or understand in bits and pieces. All we end up doing is containing this knowledge without being able to employ it to be creative," says Krishnakumar Balasubramanian (KK), artistic director of The Little Theatre who will also lead the

module of Theatre in this workshop.

With schools trying to adapt to an online medium, children seem to have fewer opportunities for experiential learning. This is where ArtsLab comes in. "The main aim is to introduce arts by incorporating science into it. We just want the kids to have fun and learn in the process."

Exploring light was a choice that came from the need to cater to the basic sensory modules, in the beginning. While physical properties of light will be explored through theatre, concepts like reflection and refraction will be told through art. In addition, wavelengths and frequencies will be dealt with, in movement and dance. These ideas will take shape over the course of a story. To look at light as a source of drama, shadow puppetry will come into play.

"The long term goal is to get more educators on board and enable them to find more innovative ways to teach," says KK.

Register at <https://forms.gle/zBe6CcZuyKEi6mTc7> or connect via Instagram @thelittletheatrechennai



Drape, plank, jump

From exercising in a sari to matching their smoothies to the garment, this is how members of the Saree In Style group keep themselves occupied during lockdown

PRIYADERSHINI S

"We wanted to show that neither the lockdown nor exercising in a sari is a hindrance to physical fitness," says Jaseena Backer who founded the Facebook group Saree In Style (SiS), in 2016. And now, to beat the isolation caused

by the lockdown due to COVID-19, its 12,000 members from across the globe are trying out a bunch of unique activities, including exercising in a sari.

Rasmi Sarat Pillai from Fazilka in Punjab wore a Kerala handloom sari and practised Kalari payttu, while Dipta Krishnam in



the US skipped nimbly in a georgette.

Jaseena, operating from her village Tanur in Malappuram district of Kerala got together with

Preeti Madhusoodan from Dubai, moderator of the group, and planned the way forward.

"Being a psychologist I knew the lockdown was likely to bring



Favourite uniform The group's lockdown session also helped promote artisans

• SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

in new uncertainties and emotional imbalances, so mental well being is a prime focus," says Jaseena, adding that activities are planned around their common love for the six yards.

On day one of the lockdown

the SiS team organised 'Tea Time Talk' and discussed the changes the lockdown would bring about. "It felt like a morning discussion at a coffee shop which was intended to let the members know that we are all in it together," says Jaseena.

The sessions also helped support and promote artisans. Priya Kamath, moderator for the month of April, introduced weaves of Telangana and Andhra through videos to create awareness. It resulted in members buying saris online, from weavers who were finding it difficult to retail during the lockdown.

To support the artisans of Kashmir the group held a quiz/knowledge segment. There was also a seg-

ment dedicated to increasing awareness about Kashmiri kaarigari.

Jaseena says she encourages members to don a sari and post a related story. She makes it a point to wear saris thrice a week during the lockdown. Her latest story on wearing a green border Gadwal is symbolic of the next generation's acceptance of the LGBT community.

Green stands for the green signal to move ahead with inclusion, explains Jaseena.

"All our events, live and virtual, are in saris; it's like a uniform we love to wear," she says, adding that all their photos in saris have to be new, which keeps members active.



POOCH CAFE



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



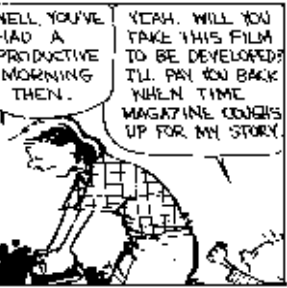
PEANUTS



TIGER



CALVIN AND HOBBS



Despite opposition, China passes Hong Kong security law

U.S. begins withdrawing special status; activists plan to defy ban on July 1 rally

REUTERS
HONG KONG/BEIJING

China's Parliament passed national security legislation for Hong Kong on Tuesday, setting the stage for the most radical changes to the former British colony's way of life since it returned to Chinese rule 23 years ago.

Details of the law – which comes in response to last year's often-violent pro-democracy protests in the city and aims to tackle subversion, terrorism, separatism and collusion with foreign forces – were yet to be released.

Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam nevertheless welcomed the law's passage and said it would come into effect later on Tuesday, giving the city's 7.5 million people little time to digest what is expected to be highly complex legislation.

Amid fears the law will crush the global financial hub's freedoms, and reports that the heaviest penalty under it would be life imprisonment, pro-democracy activist Joshua Wong's Demosisto group said it would dissolve.

"It marks the end of Hong Kong that the world knew before," Mr. Wong said on Twitter.

The legislation pushes Beijing further along a collision course with the U.S., Britain and other Western governments, which have said it erodes the high degree of autonomy the city was granted at its July 1, 1997, handover.

U.S. halts tech access

The U.S., already in dispute with China over trade, the South China Sea and the coronavirus, began eliminating



Watershed moment: Pro-China supporters celebrating the approval of a national security law in Hong Kong on Tuesday. • AP

Hong Kong's special status under U.S. law on Monday, halting defence exports and restricting technology access.

China said it would retaliate.

Ms. Lam, in a video message to the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva, urged the international community to "respect our country's right to safeguard national security".

She said the law would not undermine the city's autonomy or its independent judiciary.

Heaviest penalty

Authorities in Beijing and Hong Kong have repeatedly said the legislation is aimed at a few "troublemakers" and will not affect rights and freedoms, nor investor interests.

The editor-in-chief of the *Global Times*, a tabloid published by the *People's Daily*, the official newspaper of China's ruling Communist Party, said on Twitter the hea-

viest penalty under the law was life imprisonment.

As the law was passed in Beijing, the People's Liberation Army garrison in Hong Kong held a drill which included exercises to stop suspicious vessels and arrest fugitives, according to the Weibo social media account of state-run CCTV's military channel.

The legislation may get an early test with activists and pro-democracy politicians saying they would defy a police ban, amid coronavirus restrictions, on a rally on the anniversary of the July 1 handover.

At last year's demonstration, which came amid a series of pro-democracy protests, a crowd stormed and vandalised the city's legislature. "We will never accept the passing of the law, even though it is so overpowering," said Democratic Party chairman Wu Chi-wai.

It is unclear if attending the unauthorised rally would constitute a national

security crime.

A majority in Hong Kong opposes the legislation, a poll conducted for Reuters this month showed, but support for the protests has fallen to only a slim majority.

Police dispersed a handful of activists protesting against the law at a shopping mall.

Dozens of supporters of Beijing popped champagne corks and waved Chinese flags in celebration in front of government headquarters. "I'm very happy," said one elderly man, surnamed Lee.

This month, China's official Xinhua news agency unveiled some of the law's provisions, including that it would supersede existing Hong Kong legislation and that interpretation powers belong to China's Parliament top committee.

Britain, the EU, Japan, Taiwan and others have also criticised the law.

China has hit back at the outcry, denouncing "interference" in its internal affairs.

India, Sri Lanka hold talks over debt

PM Rajapaksa had sought a moratorium on the money owed by Colombo

MEERA SRINIVASAN
COLOMBO

India is holding "close and constructive" discussions with Sri Lanka, on Colombo's pending requests for rescheduling its debt repayment and for currency swap facilities under bilateral and SAARC arrangements, the Indian mission here said on Tuesday.

Indian High Commissioner Gopal Baglay held discussions "at senior levels" in Colombo on Monday and Tuesday, the statement issued by the High Commission said, on taking forward ongoing discussions.

Virtual talks

The press release comes two days after *The Hindu* reported that 'with India yet to respond on debt freeze request, Sri Lanka turns to China' for further assistance. Sri Lankan Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa had sought a moratorium on the debt owed



Mahinda Rajapaksa

by Colombo – totalling \$960 million – during his New Delhi visit in February this year. The request "was under consideration", officials in the Ministry of External Affairs had told *The Hindu*, adding that they were waiting to hear from Colombo on possible dates for the virtual talks New Delhi had suggested.

"The matter [Sri Lanka's requests] had been taken up

at the leadership level and has been followed up by senior functionaries bilaterally," the High Commission's statement said on Tuesday, adding that India "remains committed to partner Sri Lanka closely" for the latter's sustained economic recovery and shared prosperity in the post-COVID world.

Economy under strain

Sri Lanka's mounting external debt was a concern even before the coronavirus pandemic, but its impact has aggravated the strain on the island's nation's economy that is saddled with loans – bilateral, multilateral and in the international money market – amounting to billions of dollars.

This year alone, Sri Lanka is scheduled to repay \$2.9 billion of its debt, which Colombo is reportedly trying to reschedule with bilateral partners. It is unclear how Sri Lanka will repay the ap-

parently non-negotiable \$1 billion international sovereign bond maturing this October.

While economists and experts have been arguing that Sri Lanka must avoid resorting to further debt in this situation, Colombo appears to have few other options in hand.

Sri Lanka is in talks with the IMF, from whom it sought a rapid financing instrument in April. Following the global pandemic, Beijing has pledged a loan of \$500 million to help Colombo deal with its immediate impact. Sri Lanka already owes China about \$5 billion. Further, upon Sri Lanka's request, the China Development Bank (CDB) on Tuesday entered into a \$140 million-facility agreement with the Bank of Ceylon, drawn under two tranches of \$70 million each to help the State-owned bank cope amid the pandemic.

UN rights chief slams virus response in China, Russia, U.S.

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
GENEVA

The UN rights chief on Tuesday said COVID-19 was being instrumentalised to silence free speech, citing China and Russia, while voicing alarm at statements in the U.S. that "deny the reality" of the virus.

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet pointed to Russia, China, Kosovo, Nicaragua among others, where

"threats and intimidation against journalists, bloggers and civic activists, particularly at the local level, (were

being used) with the apparent aim of discouraging criticism of the authorities' responses to COVID-19".

Ms. Bachelet also voiced concern about "severe restrictions on freedoms of expression" in Egypt and "excessive and arbitrary enforcement" of pandemic response measures in El Salvador.

"Censorship and criminalisation of speech are likely to suppress crucial information needed to address the pandemic," she told the 44th session of the UNHRC. The former Chilean presi-

dent said it was vital for leaders to maintain "consistent, credible and fact-based communication" with citizens, praising South Korea's "open" approach to its pandemic response.

"In contrast, in Belarus, Brazil, Burundi, Nicaragua, Tanzania and the U.S. – among others – I am concerned that statements that deny the reality of viral contagion, and increasing polarisation on key issues, may intensify the severity of the pandemic by undermining efforts to curb its spread," she said.

ELSEWHERE



Johnson vows to reboot U.K. economy

DUDLEY
Prime Minister Boris Johnson pledged on Tuesday to deliver an "infrastructure revolution" to help Britain build its way out of the economic devastation of the COVID-19 outbreak. He promised £1 billion for school repairs and a further £4 billion for "shovel-ready" projects from road maintenance to public transport in what he said was a new "infrastructure revolution" that will also build new homes. **AFP**

Maduro gives EU envoy 72 hours to leave Venezuela

CARACAS
Venezuela President Nicolas Maduro on Monday gave the head of the EU mission in Caracas, Isabel Brilhante Pedrosa, 72 hours to leave the country after the bloc announced sanctions against 11 Venezuelan officials. "Who are they to try to impose themselves with threats?" he said. "We will sort it out in 72 hours. She will get a plane to leave, but we will arrange our things with the EU." **AFP**

PARADIP PORT TRUST
e-TENDER CALL NOTICE
Name of the work : "Construction of RCC Drain cum Retaining Wall alongside the IOHP Road (left side)".
EMD cost : Rs.5,07,509/- (Last Date and Time of submission of Bid : 16.07.2020 up to 17:15 Hrs. For details please refer our website: <https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app>.
Executive Engineer, Harbour Works Division No.1
PPT/PR/99/20-21, DT.30.06.2020

Putin urges Russians to vote for stability

Voting on key constitutional changes

REUTERS
MOSCOW

Vladimir Putin on Tuesday urged Russians to vote for constitutional changes that would allow him to run again for President twice, calling the reforms a guarantor of stability, security and prosperity.

Mr. Putin made his appeal at the scene of a bloody Second World War battle between the Red Army and the Nazis on the eve of the main and last day of a seven-day nationwide vote that will change the Constitution for the first time since 1993.

Under the proposed changes, which State exit polls suggest will be backed by over two thirds of voters, Mr. Putin would be allowed to run for another two six-year back-to-back terms after his current term expires in 2024. That could see the



Vladimir Putin

former KGB officer, now 67, stay in office until 2036, though Mr. Putin has said he has yet to take a final decision on what he wants to do.

Critics and staunch supporters are convinced he will run again, while some analysts believe he has not yet made his mind up but wants to keep his options open.

EU opens borders to 'safe' countries

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BRUSSELS

The European Union agreed on Tuesday to reopen its borders to 15 countries excluding the virus-stricken U.S., as the pandemic accelerated globally with more than 5,05,000 deaths worldwide.

Europe's reopening comes as countries struggle to revive economic activity while fending off new spikes of COVID-19, with hotspots still surging in Latin America and in the U.S.

After days of negotiations, EU members finalised the list of countries whose health situation was deemed safe enough to allow residents to enter the bloc from July 1 – but the U.S. was notably excluded, along with Russia and Turkey.

No consensus on Russia bounties: White House

'Trump wasn't briefed, intel unverified'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

President Donald Trump was not briefed on reports that Russia offered bounties to Taliban-linked militias to kill U.S. soldiers in Afghanistan due to concern over the accuracy of the intelligence, a White House spokeswoman said Monday.

"There is no consensus within the intelligence community on these allegations," Kayleigh McEnany said.

"In fact, there are dissenting opinions," she added, denying the President had been briefed on the explosive claims.

The *New York Times* report, citing anonymous officials, said Mr. Trump had been told about findings, which he has also denied.

'India should oppose annexation'

Palestine says Israeli move would end the effectiveness of any future dialogue

SUHASINI HAIDAR
NEW DELHI

Calling on India to oppose Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's plans to go ahead with the annexation of about a third of West Bank territories with a possible vote on July 1, the Palestinian government said the move would end the effectiveness of any future negotiations in the conflict.

"We need India to maintain its support to the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and statehood," Majdi El Khaldi, the Senior Diplomatic Advisor to Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, told *The Hindu*. "We urge India to strongly oppose any unilateral actions and violations of international law in the Palestinian Territories, including the Israeli annexation of Palestinian lands by force," he added.

It is unclear whether the Israeli government will indeed go ahead with the vote on Wednesday, given deep differences between Mr. Netanyahu and his "alternate" PM and Defence Minister Benny Gantz, who has publicly said that battling the COVID-19 pandemic was a bigger priority for Israel at present. However Mr. Netanyahu said that the final decision would be made by him, not Mr. Gantz.

The Ministry of External Affairs declined to comment on the issue, and the government has thus far issued no statement on Mr. Netanyahu's stated plans, that were part of his election promises, to pass a Cabinet vote enacting sovereignty rights over the Jordan Valley, 132 Israeli settlements and other areas totalling about 30% the West Bank. The annexation is a



Adnan Abu Al-Hajja

part of US President Donald Trump's "peace plan" authored by his advisor and son-in-law Jared Kushner. Under an agreement amongst partners in Israel's ruling coalition, the enactment can proceed from July 1.

PM Narendra Modi has spoken to Israeli PM Netanyahu three times in the past four months, mainly to discuss cooperation during the pandemic, but officials would not comment on

whether the annexation issue had been raised between them. The officials suggested that India would wait and watch developments before reacting. In January, India had disapproved of the U.S.-Israel peace plan, reiterating India's "consistent support for the Palestinian cause".

Palestinian Ambassador Adnan Abu Al-Hajja said India, which has just won a two-year non-permanent seat at the UNSC beginning January 2021, would have an international role to play on the issue. "Israel's termination of the possibility for a negotiated settlement will require States, including India, to rise to their legal and political responsibilities, especially members of the Security Council with due regard for their duty to ensure international peace and security," Mr. Al-Hajja said.

Shivamogga, Davanagere and Chitradurga Dist Co-Operative Milk Producer's Societies Union Ltd., Machenahalli, Nidige Post, Shimoga – 577 222.

IFT:No:SDCMUL/PUR/E.Proc/Tender-281C/2028/2020-21 Date: 25.06.2020

TENDER NOTIFICATION
Through GOK E-Procurement Portal only Logon to: <https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in>

Shivamogga, Davanagere and Chitradurga Dist Co-Operative Milk Producer's Societies Union Ltd., invites in two tender document system Tender i.e. Technical and Commercial system from the manufacturers or from interested eligible bidders for supply of following materials.

Sl No	Particulars	Qty	EMD (in ₹)
1	Supply, Erection, Testing and Commissioning of 20 KLPH capacity Milk Homogenizer with necessary accessories at Shivamogga Dairy.	01 set	1,96,000/-
2	Supply and Installation of 10 KVA capacity UPS with battery at Davanagere dairy, Doddabathi.	01 Nos	7,500/-
3	Supply and Installation of Handle less Sensor Based Automatic Electronic Milko Tester at specified places (DCS) of Shivamogga, Davanagere and Chitradurga Districts SHIMUL.	100 Nos	1,05,000/-
4	Printing and supply of General body meeting notice books at Shivamogga Dairy	1400 Nos	9,000/-

1. Tender Documents may be downloaded from the e-Procurement Portal of GOK from : 01.07.2020

2. Last date for uploading the filled Tender documents : 18.07.2020 up to 16.00 Hours

3. Date of opening of Technical Tender : 20.07.2020 at 17.00 Hours

4. Date of opening of Commercial Tender : 22.07.2020 at 17.00 Hours

The bidder may download the tender documents with the Technical Specification & Terms & conditions of the tender by paying e-portal fees.

The details regarding participation for this tender can be obtained by logging on to <https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in>

Any additional information regarding tender may be obtained from A.M (Pur) during office hours, **contact nos. 08182-246161, 246163 Mob: 760971951**

Sd/- Managing Director

TRANSMISSION CORPORATION OF ANDHRA PRADESH LIMITED
e-Procurement Tender Notice
The Transmission Corporation of A.P. Limited invites bids online for the following works.

Sl. No.	Spec. No.	Name of work	Date & time of availability of tenders on e-procurement
1	APT-e-12/2020	Supply, erection, testing and commissioning of (i) 132 KV DC/SC Line (2-Phase) from 132/33 KVSS Mudiguda to Proposed RTSS Kolkakunta, (ii) 1 No 132KV Bay extension at 132/33 KVSS Mudiguda and (iii) 1 No 132KV Metering Bay at 132KV RTSS Kolkakunta in Kurnool District.	From 01.07.2020 at 17.00 Hrs.

NOTE : i) Name and address of the officer inviting bids - CE/Construction-II, APTRANSOCO, Vidut soudha, Vijayawada-04. ii) The contractors/firms are requested to upload the information in pdf format only. iii) Further details can be seen in website(s) : www.apecprocurement.gov.in
DIPR 143PP/CL, Dt: 29-06-2020 Sd/- CHIEF ENGINEER/CONSTRUCTION-II

RAJASTHAN RAJYA VIDUT PRASARAN NIGAM, LTD.
OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER (AUTOMATION, N/M & SP)
(Corporate Identity Number (CIN) L40109RJ200605GC016485)
Regd Office: Vidut Bhawan, Jyoti Nagar, Jaipur-302005
Telephone No. 2740752, Fax No. 2740794, Email: se.sp@rvpn.co.in
Website: <http://energy.rajasthan.gov.in/rvpnl>

NOTICE INVITING e-BID
Online e-bids are invited from firms/ contractors for following project:
1. **BID ENQUIRY No. RVPN/EHV/A&SP/TN-58 (Unique Bid No. - VPN2021WL0B00466):** Construction of 132 KV S/C Transmission line between 132 KV GSS Nohar to 132 KV Railway TSS Nohar [Using 132 KV XLPE Cable system (2 Phase + 1 Spare)], EMD/ Bid Security: Rs. 23,86,000/- (DD/Banker Cheque or BG), Opening Date: 30.07.2020.
1. **BID ENQUIRY No. RVPN/EHV/A&SP/TN-59 (Unique Bid No. - VPN2021WL0B00468):** Establishing of 3x1500 MVA, 765/400KV Substation by upgrading 400KV GSS Kankani (Jodhpur) to 765KV GSS using GIS Technology along with associated 765 KV Terminal Bays at 765KV GSS Phagi (Jaipur) including supply of all equipments/ materials, erection (including civil works), testing and commissioning EMD/ Bid Security: Rs. 16,33,35,120/- (DD/Banker Cheque or BG), Opening Date: 31.07.2020.
The detailed NIT/Tender Document/Specification and Date Extension are available for viewing/downloading on the website <http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in>. Other details of NIT, Tender Specification Cost, e-Tender Processing Fee and submission and opening of tenders etc. are also available on the websites <http://energy.rajasthan.gov.in/rvpnl> and <http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in>.
The interested bidders should be enrolled/registered and submit/upload the on-line tender in electronic format on the website <http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in> for participating in the bidding process.
Further date extensions/amendments, if any, in the above bid shall only be notified/ published on above referred websites.
RRVPN/TR-4900/2020
Raj,Samwad/C/20/1673
Superintending Engineer (Automation, N/M & SP)

MARKET WATCH		
	30-06-2020	% CHANGE
Sensex	34,916	-0.13
US Dollar	75.51	-0.09
Gold	49,306	0.12
Brent oil	41.16	-0.75

NIFTY 50		
	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	343.90	1.25
Asian Paints	1687.45	-4.50
Axis Bank	406.65	1.85
Bajaj Auto	2826.05	-33.45
Bajaj Finserv	5845.15	-45.05
Bajaj Finance	2831.00	-26.95
Bharti Airtel	559.85	-7.25
BPL	374.00	-9.35
Britannia Ind	3603.80	84.55
Cipla	640.25	-4.65
Coal India	132.85	-2.00
Dr Reddys Lab	3944.95	-28.90
Eicher Motors	18334.30	220.80
GAIL (India)	102.15	-1.45
Grasim Ind	619.70	0.45
HCL Tech	556.85	3.15
HDFC	1754.65	13.50
HDFC Bank	1065.85	-10.20
Hero MotoCorp	2546.95	42.90
Hindalco	146.20	0.35
Hind Unilever	2180.00	-2.95
ICICI Bank	351.45	8.35
IndusInd Bank	474.80	-5.20
Bharti Infratel	221.50	2.25
Infosys	735.95	4.20
Indian OilCorp	85.35	-1.75
ITC	194.65	-2.60
JSW Steel	189.35	-1.35
Kotak Bank	1360.45	4.80
L&T	943.65	7.05
M&M	510.70	3.25
Maruti Suzuki	5838.30	159.60
Nestle India Ltd.	17174.45	449.60
NTPC	95.80	0.90
ONGC	81.35	-1.05
PowerGrid Corp	174.85	-3.40
Reliance Ind	1704.10	-19.05
State Bank	178.45	-0.80
Shree Cement	23051.05	709.10
Sun Pharma	472.95	-9.05
Tata Motors	98.25	-1.20
Tata Steel	326.70	5.85
TCS	2082.15	-19.50
Tech Mahindra	543.40	1.85
Titan	949.85	-7.60
UltraTech Cement	3893.55	86.55
UPL	425.20	-6.70
Vedanta	106.40	-1.55
Wipro	219.65	-0.05
Zee Entertainment	171.10	-0.95

EXCHANGE RATES			
Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on June 30			
CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL	
US Dollar	75.30	75.62	
Euro	84.40	84.79	
British Pound	92.36	92.79	
Japanese Yen (100)	69.88	70.18	
Chinese Yuan	10.64	10.68	
Swiss Franc	79.11	79.45	
Singapore Dollar	53.89	54.13	
Canadian Dollar	54.97	55.23	
Malaysian Ringgit	17.58	17.66	
Australian Dollar	51.49	51.72	
Source:Indian Bank			

IN BRIEF



Swiggy, ICICI Bank in digital wallet pact

BENGALURU Swiggy, an on-demand delivery platform, has launched its own digital wallet 'Swiggy Money' to enable a 'single-click checkout experience' on its platform. The full-fledged digital wallet, in partnership with ICICI Bank, will enable Swiggy's customers to store money and be used for all food orders on the platform. If the Swiggy customer is an existing ICICI Bank customer, he/she can instantly start using the wallet, according to a release.

Mondelez India forays into cakes category

MUMBAI Mondelez India with snacking brands such as Cadbury Dairy Milk, Cadbury Bournvita and Oreo has forayed into the cakes category with the introduction of Cadbury Chocobakes Choc Layered Cakes in India. The category is estimated to be worth ₹2,000 crore and growing at 18% CAGR. Without disclosing the targeted revenue, company officials said their objective was to grow faster than the market growth.

BoB plans to raise ₹2,000 cr. via bonds

NEW DELHI State-owned Bank of Baroda (BoB) said it will mop up ₹2,000 crore by issuing bonds to fund its growth plans. "... Capital Raising Committee of our bank has approved the issuance of Basel III- compliant additional tier I bonds for an aggregate total issue size not exceeding ₹2,000 crore in single or multiple tranches," BoB said. BoB had reported a standalone net profit of ₹506.59 crore for the fourth quarter ended March (₹991.37 crore). PTI

External debt rises \$15.4 billion to \$558.5 billion in March

U.S. dollar-denominated debt remains largest component of the external debt

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA MUMBAI

India's external debt stood at \$558.5 billion in March, an increase of \$15.4 billion compared with the year-ago period, according to RBI data. Commercial borrowings remained the largest component of the external debt, with a share of 39.4%, followed by non-resident deposits at 23.4% and short-term trade credit at 18.2%. The data showed valuation gains due to the appreciation of the U.S. dollar against the Indian rupee and other major currencies were at \$16.6 billion. "Excluding the valuation effect, the increase in external debt



Burden of borrowing: India's debt service rose marginally to 6.5% of current receipts, according to RBI. ■ GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

would have been \$32 billion instead of \$15.4 billion at end-March 2020 over end-March 2019," it said. At the end of March, long-term debt, with original maturity of above one year, was

placed at \$451.7 billion, a rise of \$17 billion over the level recorded in March 2019. Short-term debt on residual maturity basis constituted 42.4% of the total external debt and 49.5% of

foreign exchange reserves at the end of March. "U.S. dollar-denominated debt continued to be the largest component of India's external debt, with a share of 53.7% at end-March 2020, followed by the Indian rupee (31.9%), yen (5.6%), SDR (4.5%) and the euro (3.5%)," the RBI said. The RBI also said debt service (principal repayments plus interest payments) increased marginally to 6.5% of current receipts at the end of March compared to 6.4% in the same period a year ago. This reflects higher interest payments on commercial borrowings and lower current receipts, it added.

Govt's liabilities rise to ₹94.6 lakh cr. in Jan.-Mar.

Public debt accounts for 91%: FinMin

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

The government's total liabilities increased 0.8% to ₹94.62 lakh crore at March-end 2020 compared with the preceding quarter, a Finance Ministry report said on Tuesday.

Public debt accounted for 90.9% of total outstanding liabilities as on March 31, 2020, the quarterly report on Public Debt Management said.

"Total liabilities [including liabilities under 'Public Account'] of the government, as per provisional data, increased to ₹94,62,265 crore at end-March 2020 from ₹93,89,267 crore at end-December 2019," it said. As per the report, the



weighted average yield of primary issuances moderated further to 6.7% during the March quarter from 6.86% in October-December.

The proportion of debt (dated securities) maturing in less than one year was lower at 3.9% at end-March 2020.

Fiscal deficit at 58.6% of target in two months

REUTERS

India's federal fiscal deficit in the first two months through May this financial year stood at ₹4.66 lakh crore (\$61.67 billion), or 58.6% of the budgeted target for the current fiscal year, government data showed on Tuesday.

Net tax receipts during April-May period were ₹338.5 billion (\$4.48 billion), while total expenditure was ₹5.12 lakh crore the data showed, indicating the government was front-loading its budgeted spending to combat the impact of pandemic.

India's federal fiscal deficit touched 4.6% of GDP in the 2019-20 fiscal year ended March, from the initial estimates of 3.3%.

Loan recasts to only defer problem, not solve it: S&P

NPAs may zoom to 14% due to COVID-19, says agency

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA MUMBAI

Amid reports of the RBI mulling restructuring of loans, global rating agency S&P on Tuesday said that a loan recast would only defer recognition of NPAs and not solve the problem.

The agency also said operational outages and the recession because of the pandemic will have a deeper and longer impact on lenders than previously assumed, and estimated the gross non-performing assets ratio to rise up to 14% in FY21 from the 8.5% in FY20.

Recovery to take longer "The COVID-19 pandemic may set back the recovery of India's banking sector by years, which could hit credit flows and, ultimately, the economy," the agency said.

The pandemic has led to prolonged lockdowns and a chilling of economic activity, forcing the RBI to declare a six-month voluntary moratorium on loan repayments till September.

"... restructuring may not resolve the problem. It may just defer NPL (non performing loans) recognition, as it did a few years ago," the agency said.

It pointed out that in the past, rampant restructuring had led the RBI to come up



with an asset quality review and withdrew forbearance on the majority of restructured loans, leading to exceptionally high credit costs on banks.

In its base case, the agency expects slippages or the addition to the NPAs to come at 6% during the fiscal. If the RBI allows for restructuring of loans, it may reduce the loan slippages this fiscal, it noted. Loan recoveries will be set back by years because of the COVID-19 pandemic, which will lead to a spike in the industry's non-performing assets (NPAs) ratio, it said. The NPAs of Indian banks will shoot-up to 13-14% at the end of FY21, up from the 8.5% in FY20, Standard & Poor's credit analyst Deepali Seth-Chhabria said.

'Resolution will be slow' Resolution of stressed or bad-debt situations will like-

ly unfold slowly, which will leave banks saddled with a huge stock of bad loans next year as well, the agency said, estimating an improvement of only 1 percentage point in the NPA ratio in FY22.

According to its credit analyst Geeta Chugh, non-bank financial companies will be worse hit than banks because of lending to weaker sections, reliance on wholesale funding, and liquidity difficulties because of a higher proportion of borrowers opting for default.

The agency said NPAs had been reducing over the past 18 months, after hitting a peak of 11.6% in March 2018, when the RBI had undertaken an exhaustive asset quality review leading to emergence of high amounts of hidden stress coming out.

"Businesses' operational outages and the recession will have a deeper and longer effect on lenders than we previously assumed," it said.

From a sectoral perspective, it said airlines, hotels, malls, multiplexes, restaurants, and retail may see a significant loss of revenue and profits due to the outbreak, while highly leveraged sectors like real estate developers, telecom companies and power firms may remain a source of increased bad debt, it said.

L&T despatches cryostat lid for \$20 billion global fusion project

Vessel's function is to provide cooling to fusion reactor, keep very high temperatures under control

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI

Engineering and construction giant Larsen & Toubro (L&T) said it has achieved a major milestone under 'Make in India' initiative by building a cryostat for the \$20-billion global fusion project being built in France. The final assembly, or top

lid sectors of the cryostat, a key part of the world's largest nuclear fusion reactor being built in France, were despatched on Tuesday from the company's Hazira manufacturing complex in Surat district of Gujarat.

In 2012, Larsen & Toubro (L&T) was chosen by ITER-India to manufacture and in-

stall cryostat – a vacuum pressure vessel made of 3,850 tonnes of stainless steel. L&T Group chairman A.M. Naik termed it a "moment of pride for India and L&T."

The firm had already delivered the base section, the lower cylinder and the upper cylinder for the cryostat.

The cryostat's function is to provide cooling to the fusion reactor and keep very high temperatures at its core under control.

Innovative techniques L&T CEO and MD S.N. Subrahmanyam said the company had used innovative and digital manufacturing tech-

Current account sees a small surplus as trade deficit shrinks

Sharp rise in net invisible receipts also helped, says RBI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA MUMBAI

India recorded a current account surplus of \$0.6 billion, or 0.1% of GDP, for the January-March quarter, against a deficit of \$4.6 billion, or 0.7% of GDP in the year-ago period, the Reserve Bank said on Tuesday.

For the fiscal year 2019-20, the current account deficit narrowed to 0.9% of the GDP, compared with 2.1% in FY2018-19, the central bank said. Lower trade deficit was one of the prime reasons for the improvement in the current account balances both for the March quarter as well as for the whole fiscal year.

The current account balances, which represent the

Net services receipts rose to \$22 billion on the back of a rise in net earnings from computer and travel services

net of the country's export and imports of goods and services and also payments made to foreign investors or inflows from them, are considered as an important indicator of a country's external sector.

The Reserve Bank said the surplus in the current account in the March quarter was primarily on account of a lower trade deficit at \$35 billion and a sharp rise in net invisible receipts at \$35.6 billion as compared with the

corresponding period of last year.

The net services receipts increased to \$22 billion in March quarter as against the year earlier's \$21.3 billion on the back of a rise in net earnings from computer and travel services on a year-on-year basis, the RBI said.

Private transfer receipts, mainly representing remittances by Indians employed overseas, increased 14.8% to \$20.6 billion for the reporting quarter, the RBI said.

The net outgo from the primary income account, which primarily reflects the net overseas investment income payments, decreased to \$4.8 billion from \$6.9 billion a year ago, the RBI said.

Uniform stamp duty for deals in securities

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

The Finance Ministry on Tuesday said States will collect stamp duty at a uniform rate on transactions of shares, debentures and other securities from July 1.

The provisions of the amended Indian Stamp Act, 1899, will come into effect from Wednesday.

With this, the stamp duty will have to be paid by either the buyer or the seller of a financial security, as against the current practice of levying the duty on both. The present system of collection of stamp duty on securities market transactions led to multiple rates for the same instrument, resulting in multiple incidences of duty.

Banks sanction ₹1 lakh-cr. loans to 30 lakh MSMEs

₹45,860 crore disbursed till June 26

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

The Finance Ministry on Tuesday said banks have sanctioned more than ₹1 lakh-crore loans under the ₹3-lakh crore Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) for the MSME sector reeling under COVID-19-induced economic slowdown.

As much as ₹45,860 crore was disbursed under the 100% ECLGS for the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) till June 26, it said.

The scheme is the biggest fiscal component of the ₹20-lakh crore 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan' package announced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman last month.

The latest number on ECLGS, as released by the Finance Ministry, comprises all the 12 public sector banks (PSBs), 20 private sector banks and eight NBFCs.

"Under the 100 per cent ECLGS backed by a government guarantee, banks from public and private sectors have sanctioned loans worth over Rs 1 lakh crore as of June 26, 2020, of which more than Rs 45,000 crore has already been disbursed," the finance ministry said in a statement.

This would help more than 30 lakh MSME units and other businesses as



they restart operations post the lockdown, it said.

PSBs have sanctioned loans worth ₹57,525.47 crore whereas the private sector lenders have sanctioned ₹44,335.52 crore under the ECLGS, which started on June 1, it said.

As on June 26, the PSBs have disbursed ₹29,232 crore and private sector peers ₹16,628 crore.

The top lenders under the scheme are State Bank of India, Bank of Baroda, Punjab National Bank, Canara Bank and HDFC Bank, it added. Market leader SBI had sanctioned ₹19,593 crore and disbursed ₹12,026 crore as on June 26. It is followed by Bank of Baroda with sanctions at ₹7,273 crore and disbursement at ₹2,695 crore.

State-wise, business units of Maharashtra have got the highest cumulative sanction of ₹6,179 crore from banks, while disbursement was to the tune of ₹2,774 crore at the end of June 26.

ONGC reports first-ever quarterly loss

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

State-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corp (ONGC) on Tuesday reported its first-ever quarterly loss after it took an impairment on the slump in oil and gas prices.

India's top oil and gas producer reported a ₹3,098-crore loss in the January-March quarter compared with a profit of ₹4,240 crore in the same period a year back.

Chairman and managing director Shashi Shanker said ONGC booked an impairment loss of ₹4,899 crore in the fourth quarter of 2019-20, reflecting valuation of the firm's assets after a fall in crude oil prices. But for the impairment, the company would have booked a profit.

An impairment loss is a recognised reduction in the carrying amount of an asset that is triggered by a decline in its fair value.

The same reason also led to the company seeing FY20 net profit halving to ₹13,445 crore from ₹26,765 crore. Revenue in the fourth quarter fell to ₹21,456 crore from the ₹26,759 crore.

Mr. Shanker said overseas arm ONGC Videsh Ltd., too, saw its net profit for FY20 fall to ₹454 crore from ₹1,682 crore after it also took an impairment loss of about ₹3,000 crore.

COLLEGE PROPERTY FOR SALE IN PUNE

A well established, state-of-the-art infrastructure & Operational Engineering, MBA, MCA College (Affiliated to Savitribai Phule Pune University & Accredited by AICTE) along with newly opened well maintained CBSE School (operational) is available for sale.

Located in the serene location of Parandwadi (Adjoining Mumbai Pune express way) Land is in Public- Semi-Public zone in Pune District, Maharashtra.

Land area - around 30 acres
Built up area - around 2.30 lac sq. ft

**For Enquiries Please Contact
VIBHA BOKE +91 90110 28181**

TV PICKS

Premier League: Star Sports 1, 3 & 5S Select 1, 2 (SD & HD), 10.15 p.m.; Star Sports 1 & 5S Select 1 (SD & HD), 12.30 a.m. (Thursday)
Serie A: Sony Ten 2 & Sony Six (SD & HD), 11 p.m. & 1.15 a.m. (Thursday)

IN BRIEF



Six more Pakistan players cleared

KARACHI
Six players have been cleared to join the Pakistan cricket team in England after recording two successive negative COVID-19 tests, officials said on Tuesday. Mohammad Hafeez, Wahab Riaz, in pic, Mohammad Hasnain, Shadab Khan, Mohammad Rizwan and Fakhar Zaman can now travel to England. Meanwhile, the 20 players and 11 support staff of Pakistan who are already in England have tested negative, ECB said on Tuesday. The England training group had also tested negative, it added. AFP



Ben Stokes to captain England in opening Test

LONDON
England's World Cup hero Ben Stokes was on Tuesday named captain for the opening Test against West Indies, to be played from July 8, in place of Joe Root, who will be with his wife for the birth of their second child. PTI

Mata double revives Getafe's CL bid

MADRID
Jaime Mata scored twice as Getafe beat fellow European hopefuls Real Sociedad 2-1 on Monday to give their push for Champions League qualification from La Liga a boost.
The results: LaLiga: Getafe 2 (Mata 20-pen, 83) bt Real Sociedad 1 (Januzaj 55);
Premier League: Crystal Palace 0 lost to Burnley 1 (Mee 62). REUTERS

Akbar, Srinivas in title round

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

World No. 2 Riyaz Akbar Ali knocked out reigning World Champion Prashant More 12-17 in the penultimate round of the World Online Carrom Challenge. Riyaz meets the No. 1 in the league, Komervelli Srinivas.

In the second knock-out, Riyaz cleared the eight boards with 20 misses, and had a white slam and a black slam that reduced his net score to 12. Prashant was equally impressive, clearing the boards with 23 misses, but had only two black slams.

Riyaz had beaten Mohd. Ghufuran 26-31 in the first stage of knock-out.

In the women's section, Naga Jothi pipped the reigning World Champion S. Appoorwa 41-46. She will clash with No. 1 Rashmi Kumari. Naga Jothi had earlier stunned Aisha Sajid 35-47.

Coaches facing a lot of hardship

Current scenario has forced them to turn to alternative sources of income

KAMESH SRINIVASAN
NEW DELHI

With the coronavirus holding sway, the sports industry in the country is struggling to breathe.

Raj Hazarika, who runs many sports academies in the National Capital Region, and has submitted a petition to the Union Sports Minister to support such institutes in this moment of crisis, brings to the fore the plight of many sports professionals.

Broken our backs

"The situation has broken our backs," says Hazarika. "We have zero income. Several families depend on us. We have opened our centres with government permission, and follow all hygiene norms. Yet, there is no inflow. Due to the rising number of cases, people are afraid to step out. Therefore income is almost nil."

Hazarika feels schemes like collateral-free loans can



Back to roots: K. Ramandeep, a former junior India player and a full-time coach with FC Barcelona Football School in India, has gone back to farming in Jalandhar. ■SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

help sports professionals tide over the tough phase and stick to their chosen sports careers. "Some of the coach-

es who went back home have refused to return to work in the field of sports. E. Satyaraj, a reputed tennis coach from

Chennai, is now running a South Indian food cart in Kanpur," says Hazarika.

Aman Dev, a tennis coach from Kolkata, works in a grocery shop while Nazim Ul Islam, a tennis coach from Delhi, has fallen back on his polytechnic qualification to become a refrigerator and air-conditioning mechanic.

The list gets longer. "K. Ramandeep, a former junior India player and a full-time coach with FC Barcelona Football School in India, has gone back to farming in Jalandhar. Siddharth Dalal, who was head coach of the Junior NBA India team two years ago, is supplying biscuits to grocery shops," says Hazarika.

Another qualified basketball coach from Rajasthan, Vikram Singh, drives a 'tuk-tuk' in his hometown. The pulse of Indian sports is feeble; give it the required life support, pleads Hazarika.

Carlsen's sporting gesture

RAKESH RAO
NEW DELHI

Upholding the sportsman-ship spirit, Magnus Carlsen resigned in the second game in just four moves against Ding Liren after the latter was declared 'lost' in the first due to internet disconnection in the \$150,000 Chessable Masters on Tuesday. In the other semifinal, Anish Giri led Ian Nepomniachtchi 1.5-0.5.

Ding, who battled from an inferior opening phase in the first game to force an equal rook-and-pawn end game, tragically lost his connection. Since he could not reconnect in the time available on his clock, he was declared 'lost on time'.

Semifinals: Set One: Game One: Carlsen bt Ding , Nepomniachtchi drew with Giri; **Game Two:** Ding bt Carlsen, Giri bt Nepomniachtchi. **Quarterfinals:** Set three: Ding bt Hikaru Nakamura 2.5-0.5.



Women's Indian Open golf cancelled

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Owing to COVID-19 pandemic, the Hero Women's Indian Open golf, scheduled from October 1 to 4, 2020 has

been cancelled.

The event will return for the 14th edition at the DLF Golf and Country Club at Gurugram in October next year.

The July dream team, with Sunil Gavaskar and M.S. Dhoni



BETWEEN WICKETS

SURESH MENON

In one of the closing chapters of this classic *The Art of Cricket*, Don Bradman writes about 'The Ideal Eleven'. For those who believe that the great Australian was merely a run machine, a creature not of this world and somehow lacking in the weaknesses that make us human, here's proof that he was one of us after all. Like fans everywhere, he too understood the "fun trying to pick the best XI", as he says, and suggests XIs made of players with a specific number of letters in their names or those whose names begin with

a particular letter of the alphabet.

It is a game most fans, from seven to 70 play. It leads to arguments, exposes biases, and proves the game of cricket is not limited to the field of play. As the former Australian Prime Minister and cricket fanatic Robert Menzies said, in summer we play cricket and in winter we read about it. For 'in winter', read 'during pandemics' and you wouldn't be too far off the mark.

So, as a new month begins here's a question: Of the 12 teams possible, is the July XI – made up of cricketers born in July – the strongest? It might well be. We speak here only of Indian cricket, but the concept can be widened to include other teams, and perhaps even a 'World XI' (W.G. Grace and Allan Border, for instance, were born in July).

Here's July XI, with an additional 12th man. If you think any of the

other teams can come close, please feel free to send in your choices.

Successful opening pair

Opening the batting is one of India's most successful pairs, Sunil Gavaskar and Chetan Chauhan, who, when the latter retired, were statistically the third best behind Simpson-Lawry and Hobbs-Sutcliffe. Till Virender Sehwag changed the grammar of opening batsmanship, this was the textbook pair. Sound, risk-averse, knowing that their job was to keep the bowlers from getting at the rest of the batsmen for as long as possible.

Till Shane Warne overtook the mark, Chauhan had scored the most runs in Tests without a century. Gavaskar's record is too well known to bear repetition here, but suffice to say he is an automatic choice at the top in any all-time In-

dia XI, and a contender for an all-time Earth XI too.

At three would be Sanjay Manjrekar, to be followed by Sourav Ganguly and Chandu Borde. That's a lot of runs, a lot of experience and a lot of range. Both Ganguly and Borde have led India, and Borde, before his shoulder gave out was a top leg-spinner too. V. Subramanya comes in at No. 6. The former Karnataka captain, hard-hitting batsman and brilliant fielder turns 84 this month. Borde and Subramanya toured both England and Australia under Tiger Pataudi, Borde leading the team in Adelaide when Tiger was injured.

The all-rounders' slots are taken by G.S. Ramchand and Mahendra Singh Dhoni, two more men who led India, Ramchand to the first-ever win against Australia at Kanpur in 1959. He was a handsome striker of the ball and opened the bowling, besides, once claiming

six for 49 in a Test in Pakistan. Dhoni is, well, Dhoni.

Among the spinners in the fray is off-spinner Ghulam Ahmed, who, with Vinoo Mankad and Subhash Gupte, became the harbinger of many great Indian spin trios. With Harbhajan Singh, India's most successful off-spinner (400-plus Test wickets), also born in July, one slot is his by right.

Venkatapathy Raju, left-arm spinner, comes into the reckoning as does Chandu Sarwate, the fingerprint expert, who mixed off breaks and leg breaks. But Sarwate is best known for a century at number 10 which, in partnership with Shute Banerjee's century at 11, led to a last-wicket stand of 249 runs in a match against Surrey. Soon he was opening the batting for India against Lindwall and Miller in Australia! Raju gets in on the strength of his 93 wickets from 28 Tests.

Medium-pacers in the long list include Roger Binny, Munaf Patel, Debashish Mohanty and Vasant Ranjane (who began his First Class career with nine for 35 and a hat-trick). Munaf was the quickest of the lot, but Binny was the steadiest, and his batting credentials were far superior. Funnily enough, though he was seen as a batsman who could bowl in domestic cricket, he was a bowler who could bat in international cricket. He even opened the batting with Gavaskar.

So there you have the July team: Gavaskar, Chauhan, Sanjay Manjrekar, Ganguly, Borde, Subramanya, Dhoni, Ramchand, Binny, Harbhajan, Raju, Munaf.

Five of the team captained India, but I would hand the honour to Subramanya, possibly the finest captain never to have led the country. Selectors are allowed the occasional surprise!

Finch in awe of Kohli's consistency

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI

The weight of expectations in a cricket-mad country like India is huge, but Virat Kohli has done an exceptional job leading the side, says Australia's limited-overs skipper Aaron Finch.

"Every player, regardless of who it is, has a bad series. But very very rarely do you see Kohli, (Steve) Smith, even going back (Ricky) Ponting, Sachin (Tendulkar), these guys they don't have two bad series in a row," Finch said on the Sony Ten

Pit Stop show.

"The pressure of playing for India is one but also leading India is another and the way he (Kohli) has done it, so consistently for a long time. And taking over from (MS) Dhoni, the leadership, that is huge. The expectations were high and he kept delivering," he added.

Finch was impressed with Kohli's consistency as a batsman too.

"What has been so impressive for so long is just his consistency across three formats," said Finch.



Nonpareil: Aaron Finch is impressed with Virat Kohli's ability to live up to expectations time and time again. ■AP

NADA launches mobile application

Provides athletes easy access to wide range of information

UTHRA GANESAN
NEW DELHI

The National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) on Tuesday launched a mobile application to provide athletes easy access to information on various aspects of sport, prohibited substances and dope-testing.

The app was launched by Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju through video-conferencing

in the presence of Sports Secretary Ravi Mittal and NADA director-general Navin Agarwal.

"I congratulate NADA on this initiative. It is very important because we are working towards clean sports and the first step in that direction is to create awareness and provide relevant, accessible information so that athletes know which

medication or substances are not to be used. With this, athletes can check for themselves the list of prohibited substances and don't have to depend on anyone else for assistance," Rijiju said.

One-stop guide

NADA sees the app as a one-stop guide for all anti-doping and medication-related information. Besides provid-

ing detailed information on commonly-prescribed medicines, it allows athletes in the Registered Testing Pool to update their whereabouts and record availability for testing and learn about disciplinary and appeal panel decisions.

The app has been available online since the beginning of this year but was formally launched only now.

P.K. AJITH KUMAR
KOZHIKODE

These past few days R. Vaishali has been making news. For someone who has been overshadowed by her prodigious younger brother for most of her career, that must have been a different experience.

The Chennai girl is putting up a fine show at the FIDE Chess.com Women's Speed Chess. Vaishali said she had prepared well for the tournament. She, of course, has an excellent sparring partner at home, R. Praggnanandhaa. "He has been of great help," she said.

In the first of the four Grand Prix legs, she finished fourth on Sunday.

Commendable effort

It was a commendable effort from Vaishali, who made the final draw of the online event after going through the gruelling qualifiers. The 19-year-old stunned former World champion Antoaneta Stefanova of Bulgaria in the first round and made short work of Munkhzul Turmunkh of Mongolia to reach the semifinals. The India No. 3 fought spiritedly in the last four before narrowly losing



Adapting quickly: R. Vaishali finds the concept of Speed Chess quite exciting. ■SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS

to Ukraine's Anna Ushenina, the eventual champion.

Vaishali had, in fact, beaten runner-up Valentina Gunina in the qualifiers to book her berth for the main event. "The qualifying section was pretty tough," she told *The Hindu* over the phone. "A player gets six chances; while I made it on my fifth attempt, Gunina qualified from her last."

Vaishali, a former World under-14 and under-12 champion, finds the concept of Speed Chess thrilling. Matches are played in three segments, with games of five, three and one minute

durations. She said playing online chess was exciting. "But it can also be challenging," she said. "Sometimes your internet connection may go off or you could end up making a blunder because your mouse lets you down; I lost my queen in one of my games thus."

Vaishali said she was getting bored during the lockdown in Chennai. "So I have been studying for my B. Com course," said the first-year student of MOP Vaishnav College, who will resume her Speed Chess campaign on Wednesday when the second leg kicks off.

Plant thought to be extinct for more than 135 years found in Sikkim Himalayas

Botanists from Maharashtra and Kerala 're-discover' *Globba andersonii*, commonly known as 'dancing ladies' or 'swan flowers', near the Teesta river valley

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE
PUNE

A team of researchers from Pune and Kerala have "rediscovered" a rare and critically endangered plant species called *Globba andersonii* from the Sikkim Himalayas near the Teesta river valley region after a gap of nearly 136 years.

The plant, known commonly as 'dancing ladies' or 'swan flowers' was thought to have been extinct until its "re-collection", for the first time since 1875, by noted city-based botanist Sachin Punekar, founder of the city-

based environmental NGO Biospheres, during a field trip to Sevoke in the Darjeeling district of West Bengal.

Along with Dr. Punekar, the findings of Jayakrishnan Thachai of the Department of Botany at the University of Calicut; Vadakkoot Sankaran Hareesh of the plant taxonomy division of the Malabar Botanical Garden; and Mamiyil Sabu of the Institute for Plant Sciences in Kozhikode, was published earlier this month in the prestigious international journal, *Botany Letters*.

The paper titled 'Redis-

covery of *Globba andersonii* and three new synonymies in Indian Zingiberaceae' (belonging to the ginger or turmeric family) details the retrieval from the wilds of this endangered taxon, which was thought to be extinct after 1875.

"The earliest records of the collection of this plant were dated between the period 1862-70 when it was collected by Scottish botanist Thomas Anderson from Sikkim and Darjeeling. Then, in 1875, the British botanist Sir George King, had collected this taxon from the Sikkim



Rare find: *Globba andersonii* flowers and, right, the plant.

Himalayas," said Dr. Punekar.

Since then, the plant had not been collected for over 135 years, until chanced

upon by Dr. Punekar during a field trip to the Sevoke hill forest region in July 2011.

"Since the past nine years, myself, along with three oth-

er botanists from Kozhikode have been perfecting this discovery and confirming that this taxon is indeed the *Globba andersonii*," he said.

Globba andersonii are characterised by white flowers, non-appendaged anthers (the part of a stamen that contains the pollen) and a "yellowish lip". Classified as "critically endangered" and "narrowly endemic", the species is restricted mainly to Teesta River Valley region which includes the Sikkim Himalays and Darjeeling hill ranges.

"As no live collections

were made for the last 136 years, it was considered as presumably extinct in the wild. Efforts made by us for the rediscovery of the taxon for the past several years were in vain. However, Dr. Punekar could locate some specimens during his visit to Sevoke in July 2011, which was used to make a detailed description," said Mr. Thachai.

Dr. Punekar said that the plant usually grows in a dense colony as a lithophyte (plant growing on a bare rock or stone) on rocky slopes in the outskirts of evergreen

forests. "It is especially prevalent near small waterfalls along the roadside leading to these hill forests, which are 400-800 m. above sea level," he said.

Given the endangered nature of this species, the four researchers recommend total protection be given to the natural habitat of this taxon.

"Micro-propagation, tissue culture of this taxon and multiplication of this species and its re-introduction in the natural habitat could be the key for it to survive and thrive in the future," said Mr. Hareesh.